MABEL A. W. GILBERT
MEADOW VIEW
LENZIE

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POEMS OLD AND NEW

Book One

THE FAIRY RING

SELECTED BY

H. N. ALTON

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PREFACE

In these books of children's poetry will be found both modern copyright pieces and older poems, which have been selected to give their young readers poetic pleasure. But while it is believed that no poem will be met here which does not give such delight to readers of the age for which the volume is intended, all that are contained in the books have been submitted to a careful scrutiny; they have been required to reach a high standard of excellence, and only what is worthy of being read and memorised has been accepted. In the first part nursery rhymes have not been disdained, nor have some poems been excluded which may at first sight seem too difficult, because the comprehension of children is in some ways greater than many of us suppose. The whole body of lyrics which has been gathered is meant to arouse the interest and enthusiasm of the child, and to lead him on to the poetic worlds which lie waiting for him.

The task of arrangement has not been without its problems. The poems might have been arranged in order of difficulty, or according to their subjects. After consideration, it appeared best to set them in such an

order that by their grouping and contrasts they would attract the fancy and stimulate desire. If, at any point, the experienced teacher disagrees with the order chosen, it is hoped that the variety of the fare will be some compensation in his eyes; and at the end of each book is printed a table of the contents arranged according to subject, which he will find useful when he desires to depart from the order of printing.

The poems that follow will be found to contain imagery which is bright and rhythms which appeal naturally to the pupil, as well as poetic substance which will increase his eagerness to share in the best life of his fellows

Neither man nor child can live by facts alone. Poetry being the language that imagination has made, a poem is a healthy stimulus for the intellect as well as a refuge for fantasy and a solace for feeling. It is an imaginative adventure, undertaken for the love of the thing, and not for the pursuit of any other profit, material or immaterial. It is a state of travel, rather than of arrival, and this is so because it is a transmutation of life, which is also a quest.

H. N. A.

If You See a Fairy Ring

ANONYMOUS

If you see a fairy ring
In a field of grass,
Very lightly step around,
Tiptoe as you pass;
Last night fairies frolicked there,
And they're sleeping somewhere near.

If you see a tiny fay
Lying fast asleep,
Shut your eyes and run away,
Do not stay to peep;
And be sure you never tell,
Or you'll break a fairy spell.

New Sights

ANONYMOUS

I LIKE to see a thing I know
Has not been seen before,
That's why I cut my apple through
To look into the core.

It's nice to think, though many an eye
Has seen the ruddy skin,
Mine is the very first to spy
The five brown pips within.

When Mary goes Walking

P. R. CHALMERS

WHEN Mary goes walking
The autumn winds blow,
The poplars they curtsey,
The larches bend low;
The oaks and the beeches
Their gold they fling down,
To make her a carpet,
To make her a crown!

Jack Straw's Castle

ELEANOR FARJEON

Jack Straw
Laid down the law,
And vowed there was nothing for building like straw.
He built him a castle in less than a day,
Its walls were of stubble, its roof was of hay.
A capful of wind flew out of the straw,
And blew down his castle, and blew up Jack Straw!

I Saw a Ship A-sailing

ANONYMOUS

I saw a ship a-sailing,
A-sailing on the sea;
And, oh! it was all laden
With pretty things for me.

There were comfits in the cabin,
And apples in the hold;

The sails were made of silk,
And the masts were made of gold.

The four-and-twenty sailors
That stood between the decks
Were four-and-twenty white mice
With chains about their necks.

The captain was a duck,
With a packet on his back;
And when the ship began to move,
The captain said, "Quack! quack!"

The Months

SARAH COLERIDGE

JANUARY brings the snow,
Makes our feet and fingers glow.

February brings the rain,
Thaws the frozen lakes again.

March brings breezes loud and shrill,
Stirs the dancing daffodil.

April brings the primrose sweet,
Scatters daisies at our feet.

May brings flocks of pretty lambs,
Skipping by their fleecy dams.

June brings tulips, lilies, roses,
Fills the children's hands with posies.

Hot July brings cooling showers,
Apricots and gilly-flowers.

August brings the sheaves of corn;
Then the harvest home is borne.

Warm September brings the fruit;
Sportsmen then begin to shoot.

Fresh October brings the pheasant;
Then to gather nuts is pleasant.

Dull November brings the blast;
Then the leaves are whirling fast.

Chill December brings the sleet,
Blazing fire, and Christmas treat.

The Cuckoo

ANONYMOUS

Cuckoo, cuckoo, what do you do?
In April come I will:
In May I sing all day;
In June I change my tune:
In July about I fly;
In August away I must.

Little Gipsy Dandelion

ANONYMOUS

Little gipsy dandelion,
  Dancing in the sun,
Have you any curls to sell?
  "Not a single one!"

Little idle dandelion,
  Then I'll mow you down;
What is it you're good for, pray,
  With your golden crown?

"Ah, I gild the fields so green
In the pleasant spring,
Shining like the morning star
With the light I bring."

Hark! the Tiny Cowslip Bell

ANONYMOUS

HARK! the tiny cowslip bell
In the breeze is ringing;
Birds in every woodland dell
Songs of joy are singing.
Winter is o'er; spring once more
Spreads abroad her golden store;
Hark! the tiny cowslip bell
In the breeze is ringing.

Spring has come to make us glad;
Let us give her greeting;
Winter days are cold and sad,
Winter's reign is fleeting;

Hearts are gay, blithe as May;
Dance and sport the livelong day;
Spring has come to make us glad,
Let us give her greeting.

Cherries

ANONYMOUS

"CHERRIES! ripe cherries!"
The old woman cried,
With her snowy white apron
And basket beside.
And the little boys ran,
Eyes shining, cheeks red,
To buy bags of cherries
To eat with their bread.

Girls and Boys, Come out to Play

ANONYMOUS

GIRLS and boys, come out to play,
The moon doth shine as bright as day;

Leave your supper and leave your sleep,
And come with your playfellows into the street;
Come with a whoop, come with a call,
Come with good will or come not at all;
Up the ladder and down the wall.
A halfpenny roll will serve us all;
You'll find milk and I'll find flour,
And we'll have a pudding in half an hour.

The Lamplighters

ANONYMOUS

When I am snug and cosy
And all tucked up in bed,
I'm not afraid; for, when it's dark,
I hear the fairies tread.

Their footsteps softly twinkle
Up the blue velvet sky;
They're lighting up the fairy lamps—
The little stars on high.

Of Myself and My Bath

WILFRID THORLEY

If instead of socks and vest
In fur and feathers I were drest,
Or scales instead of wool and silk,
I'd keep myself as clean as milk.
For Tabby's small pink tongue will do
For soap and sponge and towel too;
And sparrows when they want a bath
Just wallow in the powdered path;
And fishes do not stay a minute
Out of their bath—they're always in it.

Bed in Summer

R. L. STEVENSON

In winter I get up at night
And dress by yellow candle-light.
In summer, quite the other way,
I have to go to bed by day.

I have to go to bed and see
The birds still hopping on the tree,
Or hear the grown-up people's feet
Still going past me in the street.

And does it not seem hard to you,
When all the sky is clear and blue,
And I should like so much to play,
To have to go to bed by day?

MEADOW VIEW
LENZIE

I had a Little Pony

ANONYMOUS

I HAD a little pony;
His name was Dapple Gray,
I lent him to a lady,
To ride a mile away;
She whipped him, she slashed him,
She rode him through the mire;
I would not lend my pony now
For all the lady's hire.

The Squirrel

ANONYMOUS

THE winds they did blow,
  The leaves they did wag;
Along came a beggar boy
  And put me in his bag.
He took me to London;
  A lady did me buy,
And put me in a silver cage,
  And hung me up on high;
With apples by the fire,
  And hazel nuts to crack,
Besides a little feather bed
  To rest my tiny back.

Comrades

SIR EDWARD PARRY

I WOULD like you for a comrade, for I love you,
  that I do;
I never met a little girl as amiable as you;

I would teach you how to dance and sing, and
how to talk and laugh,
If I were not a little girl and you were not a calf.

I would like you for a comrade; you should share
my barley meal,
And butt me with your little horns just hard
enough to feel;
We would lie beneath the chestnut-trees and
watch the leaves uncurl,
If I were not a clumsy calf and you a little girl.

A Wish

F. D. SHERMANN

I OFTEN sit and wish that I
Could be a kite up in the sky,
And ride upon the breeze and go
Whatever way it chanced to blow;
Then I could look beyond the town,
And see the river winding down,

And follow all the ships that sail
  Like me before the merry gale,
Until at last with them I came
  To some place with a foreign name.

The Two Rats

ANONYMOUS

He was a rat, and she was a rat,
  And down in one hole they did dwell;
And both were as black as a witch's cat,
  And they loved one another well.

He had a tail, and she had a tail,
  Both long, and curling, and fine;
And each said, "Yours is the finest tail
  In the world, excepting mine."

He smelt the cheese, and she smelt the cheese,
  And they both pronounced it good;
And both remarked it would greatly add
  To the charms of their daily food.

He ventured out, and she ventured out,
And I saw them go with pain:
But what befell them I never could tell,
For they never came back again.

A Fox crept out on a Moonlight Night

ANONYMOUS

A Fox crept out on a moonlight night,
When stars were shining and all things bright:
"Oh, oh!" said he: "it's a very fine night
For me to go through the town, heigho!"

The Fox, when he came to yonder stile,
Lifted his ears and listened awhile;
"Oh, oh!" said the Fox, "'tis but a short mile
From this to yonder town, heigho!"

The Fox, when he came to the farmer's gate,
Who should he see but the farmer's drake?
"I love you," said he, "for your master's sake,
And I long to be picking your bones, heigho!"

The grey goose ran all round the haystack,
"Oh, oh!" said the Fox, "you're tasty and fat,
And you'll do very well to ride on my back
From this to yonder town, heigho!"

The farmer's goodwife jumped up at one,
And looked through the window, and uttered a groan:
And she cried "John! John! the grey goose has gone;
For the Fox has been through the town, heigho!"

The farmer loaded his pistol with lead,
And shot the old rogue of a fox through the head,
"Ah! ah!" said the farmer, "I think you are dead,
And no more will you trouble the town, heigho!"

The North Wind

ANONYMOUS

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the robin do then, poor thing?

O, he'll go to a barn,
And, to keep himself warm,
He'll hide his head under his wing, poor thing.

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the swallow do then, poor thing?
O, do you not know
He's gone long ago
To a country much warmer than ours, poor thing?

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the dormouse do then, poor thing?
Rolled up in a ball,
In his nest snug and small,
He'll sleep till the winter is past, poor thing.

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the children do then, poor things?
O, when lessons are done,
They'll jump, skip, and run,
And play till they make themselves warm, poor things.

Jack Frost

GABRIEL SETOUN

THE door was shut, as doors should be,
Before you went to bed last night;
But Jack Frost has got in, you see,
And left your window silver-white.

He must have waited till you slept;
And not a single word he spoke,
Bnt pencilled o'er the panes and crept
Away again before you woke.

And now you cannot see the hills
Nor fields that stretch beyond the lane;
But there are fairer things than these
His fingers traced on every pane.

Rocks and castles towering high;
Hills and dales and streams and fields;
And knights in armour riding by,
With nodding plumes and shining shields.

And here are little boats, and there
Big ships with sails spread to the breeze;

And, yonder, palm-trees waving fair
  On islands set in silver seas.

And butterflies with gauzy wings;
  And herds of cows, and flocks of sheep;
And fruit and flowers and all the things
  You see when you are sound asleep.

For, creeping softly underneath
  The door when all the lights are out,
Jack Frost takes every breath you breathe
  And knows the things you think about.

He paints them on the window pane
  In fairy lines with frozen steam;
And when you wake you see again
  The lovely things you saw in dream.

Santa Claus

ANONYMOUS

He comes in the night! He comes in the night!
  He softly, silently comes,

While the little brown heads on the pillows white
Are dreaming of bugles and drums.

He cuts through the snow like a ship through the foam,
While the white flakes round him whirl,
Who tells him I know not, but he comes to the home
Of each little boy and girl.

His sleigh is roomy and long and wide;
It will carry ten thousand things;
Bugles and drums hanging over the side,
With their sticks thrust under their strings.

But never a sound of a drum is heard
Nor a blast of a bugle is blown,
As he mounts to the roof like a soaring bird,
And drops to the hearth like a stone.

The little black stockings he silently fills,
Till they bulge with their hidden store,
And sets down a sledge for the snow-clad hills,
And silently creeps to the door.

Then he mounts again to the roof like a bird,
And glides to his seat on his sleigh,
While never the sound of a bugle is heard
As he noiselessly gallops away.

He rides to the West, and he rides to the East,
Of his presents he keeps back none;
But he eats the crumbs of the Christmas feast
When all the children have done.

Old Santa Claus does all that he can—
This beautiful mission is his;
Then, children, be kind to the little old man,
When you find who the old man is.

Windy Nights

R. L. STEVENSON

Whenever the moon and stars are set,
Whenever the wind is high,
All night long in the dark and wet,
A man goes riding by.

Late in the night when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,
And ships are tossed at sea,
By, on the highway, low and loud,
By at the gallop goes he:
By at the gallop he goes, and then
By he comes back at the gallop again.

The Tale of Miss Polly Wog Wog

ANONYMOUS

This is the tale of Miss Polly Wog Wog,
Who lived in the midst of the country of Bog.
Of brothers she numbered one hundred and four,
Of sisters two hundred—or possibly more.
No matter; whatever the total might be,
She never was lacking for playmates, you see.
So hide-and-go-seek and pom-pom-pull-away,
She played in the mud and the water all day;

For water and mud were the young Wogs' delights,
They frolicked there, dined there, and slept there at nights.

Miss Polly was vain—though we hardly could call
Her face or her figure attractive at all.
Like most of her family, be it here said,
She was seven-twelfths tail and the rest of her head.
Yes, Polly was truly exceedingly plain—
But her tail was the thing that was making her vain.
Her father cried "Shame!" and her mother cried "Fie!"
Her brothers said "Goose!" and her sisters said "My!"
And dreadful misfortune would happen, they vowed,
To a girl who was always so silly and proud.

But the more they entreated, and threatened, and warned,
The more their advice and their efforts were scorned,

And Polly went wiggling and wriggling about—
Such airs! You would think she was some speckled trout!
But soon she encountered a terrible fate,
Which, just as a moral, I'll briefly relate:
She kept growing ugly! But that's not the worst—
She swelled so that one day she suddenly burst!
And alas! she was changed to a common green frog,
What an end to the tale of Miss Polly Wog Wog!

Foreign Lands

R. L. STEVENSON

Up into the cherry tree
Who should climb but little me?
I held the trunk with both my hands
And looked abroad on foreign lands.

I saw the next-door garden lie,
Adorned with flowers, before my eye,

And many pleasant places more
That I had never seen before.

I saw the dimpling river pass
And be the sun's blue looking-glass;
The dusty roads go up and down
With people tramping in to town.

If I could find a higher tree
Farther and farther I should see,
To where the grown-up river slips
Into the sea among the ships;

To where the roads on either hand
Lead onward into fairyland,
Where all the children dine at five
And all the playthings come alive.

The Lost Doll

CHARLES KINGSLEY

I ONCE had a sweet little doll, dears,
The prettiest doll in the world;

Her cheeks were so red and so white, dears,
And her hair was so charmingly curled.
But I lost my poor little doll, dears,
As I played on the heath one day;
And I cried for her more than a week, dears,
But I never could find where she lay.

I found my poor little doll, dears,
As I played on the heath one day;
Folks say she is terribly changed, dears,
For her paint is all washed away,
And her arm's trodden off by the cows, dears,
And her hair not the least bit curled;
Yet for old sakes' sake she is still, dears,
The prettiest doll in the world.

A Little Mistake

A. M. PLATT

I STUDIED my tables over and over, and backwards and forwards, too;
But I couldn't remember six times nine, and I didn't know what to do,

Till sister told me to play with my doll, and not
to bother my head.
"If you call her 'fifty-four' for a while, you'll
learn it by heart," she said.

So I took my favourite Mary Ann (though I
thought 'twas a dreadful shame
To give such a perfectly lovely child such a
perfectly horrid name),
And I called her "My dear little fifty-four" a
hundred times, till I knew
The answer of six times nine as well as the
answer of two times two.

Next day, Elizabeth Wrigglesworth, who always
acts so proud,
Said "Six times nine is fifty-two," and I nearly
laughed aloud!
But I wished I hadn't when teacher said, "Now,
Dorothy, tell if you can."
For I thought of my doll, and—oh dear, oh
dear!—I answered "Mary Ann"!

London Bells

ANONYMOUS

Gay go up and gay go down,
To ring the bells of London Town.

Bulls'-eyes and targets,
Say the bells of St. Marg'ret's.

Brickbats and tiles,
Say the bells of St. Giles.

Halfpence and farthings,
Say the bells of St. Martin's.

Oranges and lemons,
Say the bells of St. Clement's.

Pancakes and fritters,
Say the bells of St. Peter's.

Two sticks and an apple,
Say the bells at Whitechapel.

Old Father Baldpate,
Say the slow bells at Aldgate.

You owe me ten shillings,
Say the bells at St. Helen's.

When will you pay me?
Say the bells at Old Bailey.

When I grow rich,
Say the bells at Shoreditch.

Pray, when will that be?
Say the bells at Stepney.

I am sure I don't know,
Says the great bell at Bow.

In May

ANONYMOUS

In May I go a-walking to hear the linnet sing,
The blackbird and the throstle, a-praising God the King;
It cheers the heart to hear them, to see the leaves unfold,
And the meadows scattered over with buttercups of gold.

Simple Simon

ANONYMOUS

Simple Simon met a pieman,
Going to the fair;
Said Simple Simon to the pieman,
"Let me taste your ware."

Said the pieman to Simple Simon,
"Show me first your penny."
Said Simple Simon to the pieman,
"Indeed I have not any."

Simple Simon went a-fishing
For to catch a whale;
But all the water he had got
Was in his mother's pail.

Simple Simon went to look
If plums grew on a thistle;
He pricked his fingers very much,
Which made poor Simon whistle.

Morning Song

C. F. ALEXANDER

Now the dreary night is done
Comes again the glorious sun,
Crimson clouds and silver-white,
Wait upon his breaking light.

Glistening in the garden beds
Flowers lift up their dewy heads,
And the shrill cock claps his wings,
And the merry lark upsprings.

When the eastern sky is red,
I, too, lift my little head.
When the lark sings loud and gay,
I, too, rise to praise and pray.

The Star

JANE TAYLOR

Twinkle, twinkle little star!
How I wonder what you are!—

Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

When the blazing sun is gone,
When he nothing shines upon,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle all the night.

Then the traveller in the dark
Thanks you for your tiny spark!
He could not see which way to go
If you did not twinkle so.

In the dark blue sky you keep,
And often through my curtains peep;
For you never shut your eye
Till the sun is in the sky.

As your bright and tiny spark
Lights the traveller in the dark,
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star!

See, in yonder Manger low

E. CASWALL

See, in yonder manger low,
Born for us on earth below,
See, the tender Lamb appears,
Promised from eternal years.

Low within a manger lies
He who built the starry skies,
He who, throned in height sublime,
Sits amid the cherubim.

Say, ye holy shepherds, say,
What your joyful news to-day;
Wherefore have ye left your sheep
On the lonely mountain steep?

"As we watched at dead of night,
Lo, we saw a wondrous light:
Angels, singing Peace on Earth,
Told us of the Saviour's birth."

Sacred Infant, all divine,
What a tender love was thine,

Thus to come from highest bliss
Down to such a world as this!

Teach, O teach us, holy Child,
By thy face so meek and mild,
Teach us to resemble thee
In thy sweet humility.

Ducks

NORMAN AULT

As I went down the village green,
  Quack-quack! Quack-quack!
Such a sight as never was seen,
On a fine wet day in the morning.

Three ducks came swimming down the stream,
  Quack-quack! Quack-quack!
(I was awake: it was no dream)
On a gay grey day in the morning.

Yet when they saw me standing by,
Quack-quack! Quack-quack!
They stood on their heads with their tails to the sky,
On a mild wild day in the morning.

And when they had done just what I say,
Quack-quack! Quack-quack!
They shook their tails and sailed away,
On a fine wet day in the morning.

The Ladybird

CHARLOTTE T. SMITH

Ladybird! Ladybird! fly away home,
The field-mouse has gone to her nest;
The daisies have shut their sleepy gold eyes,
And the bees and the birds are at rest.

Ladybird! Ladybird! fly away home,
The glow-worm is lighting her lamp;

The dew's falling fast, and your fine speckled wings
Will be wet with the close-clinging damp.

Ladybird! Ladybird! fly away home,
The fairy bells tinkle afar:
Make haste or they'll catch you and harness you fast
With a cobweb to Oberon's car!

Little Trotty Wagtail

JOHN CLARE

Little Trotty Wagtail, he went in the rain,
And twittering, tottering sideways, he ne'er got straight again;
He stooped to get a worm, and looked up to get a fly,
And then he flew away ere his feathers they were dry.

Little Trotty Wagtail, he waddled in the mud,

And left his little footmarks, trample where he would.
He waddled in the water-pudge, and waggle went his tail,
And chirrupt up his wings to dry upon the garden rail.

Little Trotty Wagtail, you nimble all about,
And in the dimpling water-pudge you waddle in and out;
Your home is nigh at hand, and in the warm pigsty,
So, little Master Wagtail, I'll bid you a good-bye.

Spring is Coming

ANONYMOUS

Spring is coming, spring is coming,
Birdies, build your nest;
Weave together straw and feather,
Doing each your best.

Spring is coming, spring is coming,
Flowers are coming too:
Pansies, lilies, daffodillies
Now are coming through.

Spring is coming, spring is coming,
All around is fair:
Shimmer and quiver on the river,
Joy is everywhere.

We wish you a happy May.

Hay-Time

C. M. LOWE

Come out, come out, this sunny day,
The fields are sweet with new-mown hay,
The birds are singing loud and clear,
For summer-time once more is here;
So bring your rakes and come and play,
And toss and tumble in the hay.

The sweet wild roses softly blow,
All pink and white the roses grow;
The nodding daisies in the grass,
Lift up their heads to hear you pass
Upon this happy sunny day,
When you come out to make the hay.

Boats Sail on the Rivers

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

Boats sail on the rivers,
And ships sail on the seas;
But clouds that sail across the sky
Are prettier far than these.

There are bridges on the rivers,
As pretty as you please;
But the bow that bridges heaven,
And overtops the trees,
And builds a road from earth to sky,
Is prettier far than these.

The Kitten and the Mouse

ANONYMOUS

Once there was a little kitty,
White as the snow;
In a barn she used to frolic
Long time ago.

In the barn a little mousie
Ran to and fro,
For she heard the little kitty
Long time ago.

Two black eyes had little kitty,
Black as a crow,
And they spied the little mousie
Long time ago.

Four soft paws had little kitty,
Soft as the snow;
And they caught the little mousie
Long time ago.

Nine pearly teeth had little kitty,
All in a row;
And they bit the little mousie
Long time ago.

When the teeth bit little mousie,
Mousie cried out "Oh!"
But she slipped away from kitty
Long time ago.

The Cats' Tea Party

ANONYMOUS

Five little pussy-cats, invited out to tea,
Cried "Mother, let us go—oh, do! for good we'll surely be:
We'll wear our bibs and hold our things as you have shown us how—
Spoons in right paws, cups in left—and make a pretty bow.
We'll always say, 'Yes if you please,' and 'Only half of that.'"

"Then go, my darling children," said the happy
mother cat.
The five little pussy-cats went out that night to
tea:
Their heads were smooth and glossy, their tails
were swinging free:
They held their things as they had learned, and
tried to be polite:
With snowy bibs beneath their chins they were
a pretty sight.
But, alas for manners beautiful, and coats as soft
as silk!
The moment that the little cats were asked to
take some milk,
They dropped their spoons, forgot to bow, and oh,
what do you think?—
They put their noses in their cups and all began
to drink!
Yes, every naughty little cat set up a mew for
more,
Then knocked the teacups over, and scampered
through the door.

Baby Seed Song

EDITH NESBIT

Little brown brother, oh! little brown brother,
Are you awake in the dark?
Here we lie cosily, close to each other:
Hark to the song of the lark—
"Waken!" the lark says, "waken and dress you,
Put on your green coats and gay;
Blue sky will shine on you, sunshine caress you—
Waken, 'tis morning—'tis May!"

Little brown brother, oh! little brown brother,
What kind of flower will you be?
I'll be a poppy—all white, like my mother;
Do be a poppy like me.
What! you're a sun-flower? How I shall miss you
When you're grown golden and high!
But I shall send all the bees up to kiss you;
Little brown brother, good-bye.

Grasshopper Green

ANONYMOUS

Grasshopper Green is a comical chap ;
He lives on the best of fare.
Bright little trousers, jacket, and cap,
These are his summer wear.
Out in the meadow he loves to go,
Playing away in the sun ;
It's hopperty, skipperty, high and low—
Summer's the time for fun.

Grasshopper Green has a quaint little house ;
It's under the hedgerow gay.
Grandmother Spider, as still as a mouse,
Watches him over the way.
Gladly he's calling the children, I know,
Out in the beautiful sun ;
It's hopperty, skipperty, high and low—
Summer's the time for fun.

Mrs. Jarvis

ELIZABETH FLEMING

Old Mrs. Jarvis, she sits on a cart,
Her pony is quicker to stop than to start,
But always she ambles on fine easy rambles
From village to village, to fair and to mart.

The pony is fat and a-glitter with brass,
The cart it is green as the greenest of grass,
And rabbit skins dangle and old bottles jangle,
And she sits in the midst, and she bows as you pass.

Her eyes are like blackberries shining with dew.
She wears a red kerchief and a jacket of blue;
And a hat with a feather, a-nodding together,
A-nodding, a-nodding a-nodding at you!

How splendid to sit up so lofty and lone,
To go anywhither, a leaf that is blown;
To wander and wander up here and down yonder,
With a pony and trap and a trade all your own!

The Spider and the Fly

MARY HOWITT

"Will you walk into my parlour?" said the
Spider to the Fly;
"'Tis the prettiest little parlour that ever you
did spy;
The way into my parlour is up a winding stair,
And I have many curious things to show you
when you're there."
"Oh, no, no," said the little Fly; "to ask me is
in vain;
For who goes up your winding stair can ne'er
come down again."

"I'm sure you must be weary, dear, with soaring
up so high;
Will you rest upon my little bed?" said the Spider
to the Fly;
"There are pretty curtains drawn around; the
sheets are fine and thin;
And, if you like to rest awhile, I'll snugly tuck
you in!"

"Oh, no, no," said the little Fly; "for I've often
heard it said
They never, never wake again who sleep upon
your bed."

Said the cunning Spider to the Fly: "Dear friend,
what can I do
To show the warm affection that I've always felt
for you?
I have within my pantry good store of all that's
nice;
I'm sure you're very welcome if you'll please to
take a slice."
"Oh, no, no," said the little Fly; "kind sir, that
cannot be;
I've heard what's in your pantry, and I do not
wish to see."

"Sweet creature," said the Spider, "you're witty
and you're wise;
How handsome are your gauzy wings, how brilliant
are your eyes!
I have a little looking-glass upon my parlour shelf;

If you'll step inside one moment, dear, you shall
behold yourself."
"I thank you, gentle sir," she said, "for what
you're pleased to say,
And, bidding you good morning now, I'll call
another day."

The Spider turned him round about, and went
into his den,
For well he knew the silly Fly would soon come
back again;
So he wove a subtle web in a little corner sly,
And set his table ready, to dine upon the Fly.

Then he came out to his door again, and merrily
did sing:
"Come hither, hither, pretty Fly, with the pearl
and silver wing;
Your robes are green and purple, there's a crest
upon your head;
Your eyes are like the diamond bright, but mine
are dull as lead!"

Alas! alas! how very soon this silly little Fly,
Hearing his wily flattering words, came slowly flitting by:
With buzzing wings she hung aloft, then near and nearer drew,
Thinking of her brilliant eyes, and green and purple hue,
Thinking of her crested head, poor foolish thing. At last
Up jumped the cunning Spider, and fiercely held her fast.
He dragged her up his winding stair, into his dismal den,
Within his little parlour—but she ne'er came out again.

The Fifteen Acres

JAMES STEPHENS

I

I CLING and swing
On a branch, and sing

Through the cool clear hush of morning O!
Or fling my wing
On the air, and bring
To sleepier birds a warning O!
That the night's in flight,
And the sun's in sight,
And the dew is the grass adorning O!

And the green leaves swing
As I sing, sing, sing:
Up by the river,
Down the dell,
To the little wee nest,
Where the big tree fell,
So early in the morning O!

II

I flit and twit
In the sun for a bit,
When his light so bright is shining O!

Or sit, and fit
My plumes, or knit
Straw plaits for the nest's nice lining O!
That she, with glee,
Shows unto me,
Underneath her wing reclining O!

And I sing that Peg
Has an egg, egg, egg!
Up by the oat-field,
Round the mill,
Past the meadow,
Down the hill,
So early in the morning O!

III

I stoop and swoop
In the air, or loop
Through the trees, and then go soaring O!
To group, with a troop,
On the skiey poop,
While the wind behind is roaring O!

I skim and swim
By a cloud's red rim,
And up to the azure flooring O!

And my wide wings drip,
As I slip, slip, slip,
Down through the rain-drops,
Back where Peg
Broods in the nest
On the little white egg,
So early in the morning O!

Jim Jay

WALTER DE LA MARE

Do diddle di do,
  Poor Jim Jay
Got stuck fast
  In Yesterday.
Squinting he was,
  On cross-legs bent,

Never heeding
The wind was spent.
Round veered the weathercock
The sun drew in—
And stuck was Jim
Like a rusty pin. . . .
We pulled and we pulled
From morn till twelve,
Jim, too frightened
To help himself.
But all in vain.
The clock struck one,
And there was Jim
A little bit gone.
At half-past five
You scarce could see
A glimpse of his flapping
Handkerchee.
And when came noon,
And we climbed sky-high,
Jim was a speck
Slip-slipping by.

Come to-morrow,
The neighbours say,
He'll be past crying for;
Poor Jim Jay.

Seven Times One

JEAN INGELOW

THERE'S no dew left on the daisies and clover,
There's no rain left in heaven:
I've said my "seven times" over and over,
Seven times one are seven.

I am old, so old, I can write a letter;
My birthday lessons are done;
The lambs play always, they know no better;
They are only one times one.

O moon! in the night I have seen you sailing
And shining so round and low;

You were bright! ah, bright! but your light is failing—
You are nothing now but a bow.

You moon, have you done something wrong in heaven
That God has hidden your face?
I hope if you have you will soon be forgiven,
And shine again in your place.

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow,
You've powdered your legs with gold!
O brave marsh marybuds, rich and yellow,
Give me your money to hold!

O columbine, open your folded wrapper,
Where two twin turtle-doves dwell!
O cuckoo-pint, toll me the purple clapper
That hangs in your clear round bell!

And show me your nest with the young ones in it;
I will not steal them away;
I am old! You may trust me, linnet, linnet—
I am seven times one to-day.

Sweet and Low

LORD TENNYSON

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
  Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
  Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
  Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
  Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
  Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west,
  Under the silver moon:
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

The Elf and the Dormouse

OLIVER HERFORD

Under a toadstool
  Crept a wee Elf,
Out of the rain
  To shelter himself.

Under the toadstool,
  Sound asleep,
Sat a big Dormouse
  All in a heap.

Trembled the wee Elf,
  Frightened, and yet
Fearing to fly away,
  Lest he got wet,

To the next shelter—
  Maybe a mile!
Sudden the wee Elf
  Smiled a wee smile,

Tugged till the toadstool
  Toppled in two;
Holding it over him,
  Gaily he flew.

Soon he was safe home,
  Dry as could be.
"Soon woke the Dormouse—
  Good gracious me!
"Where is my toadstool?"
  Loud he lamented.
And that's how umbrellas
  First were invented.

The Elves

ANONYMOUS

If you make a daisy chain,
  And hang it on a tree,
Elves will have it for a swing—
  You just try and see.

If you put a bunch of may
  Somewhere in the ground,
Elves will trim their hat-brims with it,
  And then dance round and round.

If you shake the petals down,
  From a crimson rose,
Elves will come and gather them
  To make their Sunday clothes.

If you drop an apple blossom
  When the dew is on it,
Elves will set to work and make
  A baby fairy's bonnet.

The Fairies

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

Up the airy mountain,
  Down the rushy glen,

We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

2

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

3

High on the hill-top
The old King sits;
He is now so old and gray,
He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
Columbkill he crosses

On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses,
Or going up with music
On cold starry nights,
To sup with the queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
For seven years long;
When she came down again,
Her friends were all gone.
They took her lightly back,
Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep,
But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lake
On a bed of flag-leaves,
Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,
Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
For pleasure here and there.

Is any man so daring
  As dig them up in spite,
He shall find their sharpest thorns
  In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
  Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
  For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
  Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
  And white owl's feather.

A Fairy went a-Marketing

ROSE FYLEMAN

A FAIRY went a-marketing—
  She bought a little fish;
She put it in a crystal bowl
  Upon a golden dish.

An hour she sat in wonderment
And watched its silver gleam,
And then she gently took it up
And slipped it in a stream.

2

A fairy went a-marketing—
She bought a coloured bird;
It sang the sweetest, shrillest song
That ever she had heard.
She sat beside its painted cage
And listened half the day,
And then she opened wide the door
And let it fly away.

3

A fairy went a-marketing—
She bought a winter gown
All stitched about with gossamer
And lined with thistle down.
She wore it all the afternoon
With prancing and delight,
Then gave it to a little frog
To keep him warm at night.

MEADOW VIEW
LENZIE

A fairy went a-marketing—
  She bought a gentle mouse
To take her tiny messages,
  To keep her tiny house.
All day she kept its busy feet
  Pit-patting to and fro,
And then she kissed its silken ears,
  Thanked it, and let it go.

Hiawatha's Childhood

H. W. LONGFELLOW

By the shores of Gitche Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis.
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis;
Dark behind it rose the forest,
Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees,
Rose the firs with cones upon them;
Bright before it beat the water,
Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water.
At the door on summer evenings

Sat the little Hiawatha;
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,
Heard the lapping of the water,
Sounds of music, words of wonder;
"Minne-wawa!" said the pine-trees,
"Mudway-aushka!" said the water.

Saw the moon rise from the water,
Rippling, rounding from the water,
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,
Whispered "What is that, Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered:
"Once a warrior, very angry,
Seized his grandmother, and threw her
Up into the sky at midnight;
Right against the moon he threw her;
'Tis her body that you see there."

Saw the rainbow in the heaven,
In the eastern sky the rainbow,
Whispered "What is that, Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered:
"'Tis the flowers of heaven you see there;

All the wild-flowers of the forest,
All the lilies of the prairie,
When on earth they fade and perish,
Blossom in that heaven above us."

Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in Summer,
Where they hid themselves in Winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them " Hiawatha's chickens."

Of all the beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them " Hiawatha's Brothers."

Hiawatha's Manhood

Out of childhood into manhood
Now had grown my Hiawatha,
Skilled in all the craft of hunters,
Learned in all the lore of old men,
In all youthful sports and pastimes,
In all manly arts and labours.
Swift of foot was Hiawatha;
He could shoot an arrow from him,
And run forward with such fleetness,
That the arrow fell behind him!
Strong of arm was Hiawatha;
He could shoot ten arrows upwards,
Shoot them with such strength and swiftness,
That the tenth had left the bow-string
Ere the first to earth had fallen!

He had mittens, Minjekahwun,
Magic mittens made of deer-skin;
When upon his hands he wore them,
He could smite the rocks asunder,
He could grind them into powder.

He had moccasins enchanted,
Magic moccasins of deer-skin;
When he bound them round his ankles,
When upon his feet he tied them,
At each stride a mile he measured!

From his lodge went Hiawatha,
Dressed for travel, armed for hunting;
Dressed in deer-skin shirt and leggings,
Richly wrought with quills and wampum;
On his head his eagle-feathers,
Round his waist his belt of wampum,
In his hand his bow of ashwood,
Strung with sinews of the reindeer;
In his quiver oaken arrows,
Tipped with jasper, winged with feathers;
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,
With his moccasins enchanted.

So he journeyed westward, westward,
Left the fleetest deer behind him,
Left the antelope and bison,
Crossed the rushing Esconaba,

Crossed the mighty Mississippi,
Passed the Mountains of the Prairie,
Passed the land of Crows and Foxes,
Passed the dwellings of the Blackfeet,
Came unto the Rocky Mountains,
To the kingdom of the West-Wind.

Hiawatha's Sailing

"Give me of your bark, O Birch-Tree!
Of your yellow bark, O Birch-Tree,
Growing by the rushing river,
Tall and stately in the valley!
I a light canoe will build me,
Build a swift Cheemaun for sailing,
That shall float upon the river,
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily!
Lay aside your cloak, O Birch-Tree!
Lay aside your white-skin wrapper,
For the Summer-time is coming,

And the sun is warm in heaven,
And you need no white-skin wrapper!"

Thus aloud cried Hiawatha
In the solitary forest,
By the rushing Taquamenaw,
When the birds were singing gaily,
In the Moon of Leaves were singing,
And the sun, from sleep awaking,
Started up and said "Behold me!
Geezis, the great Sun, behold me!"

And the tree with all its branches
Rustled in the breeze of morning,
Saying, with a sigh of patience,
"Take my cloak, O Hiawatha."

With his knife the tree he girdled;
Just beneath its lowest branches,
Just above the roots he cut it,
Till the sap came oozing outward;
Down the trunk, from top to bottom,
Sheer he cleft the bark asunder,

With a wooden wedge he raised it,
Stripped it from the trunk unbroken.

"Give me of your boughs, O Cedar!
Of your strong and pliant branches,
My canoe to make more steady,
Make more strong and firm beneath me!"

Through the summit of the Cedar
Went a sound, a cry of horror,
Went a murmur of resistance;
But it whispered, bending downward,
"Take my boughs, O Hiawatha!"

Down he hewed the boughs of cedar,
Shaped them straightway to a framework,
Like two bows he formed and shaped them,
Like two bended bows together.

Thus the Birch Canoe was builded
In the valley, by the river,
In the bosom of the forest;
And the forest life was in it,
All its mystery and its magic,

All the lightness of the birch-tree,
All the toughness of the cedar;
And it floated on the river
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily.

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Book Two

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A Spring Song

ROBERT BROWNING

The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn ;
Morning's at seven ;
The hill-side's dew-pearled ;
The lark's on the wing :
The snail's on the thorn :
God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world !

April Rain

ROBERT LOVEMAN

It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining daffodils ;
In every dimpled drop I see
Wild flowers on the hills.

The clouds of grey engulf the day
  And overwhelm the town—
It isn't raining rain to me,
  It's raining roses down.

It isn't raining rain to me,
  But fields of clover bloom
Where any buccaneering bee
  May find a bed and room.
A health unto the happy,
  A fig for him who frets—
It isn't raining rain to me,
  It's raining violets.

Clouds

F. D. SHERMAN

The sky is full of clouds to-day,
  And idly to and fro
Like sheep among the pasture, they
  Across the heavens go.

I hear the wind with merry noise
  Around the house-tops sweep,
And dream it is the shepherd boys—
  They're driving home their sheep.

The clouds move faster now ; and, see !
  The west is red and gold.
Each sheep seems hastening to be
  The first within the fold.
I watch them hurry on until
  The blue is clear and deep,
And dream that far beyond the hill
  The shepherds fold their sheep.

Then in the sky the trembling stars
  Like little flowers shine out,
While Night puts up the shadow bars,
  And darkness falls about.
I hear the shepherd-wind's good-night—
  " Good-night, and happy sleep ! "—
And dream that in the east, all white,
  Slumber the clouds, the sheep.

A Child's Song in Spring

EDITH NESBIT

The silver birch is a dainty lady,
She wears a satin gown ;
The elm-tree makes the old churchyard shady,
She will not live in town.

The English oak is a sturdy fellow,
He gets his green coat late ;
The willow is smart in a suit of yellow,
While brown the beech trees wait.

Such a gay green gown God gave the larches—
As green as He is good !
The hazels hold up their arms for arches
When Spring rides through the wood.

The chestnut's proud, and the lilac's pretty,
The poplar's gentle and tall,
But the plane-tree's kind to the poor dull city—
I love him best of all.

Donnybrook

JAMES STEPHENS

I saw the moon, so broad and bright,
Sailing high on a frosty night :

And the air shone silverly between
The pearly queen, and the silver queen ;

And here a white, and there a white
Cloud-mist swam in a mist of light.

And, all encrusted in the sky,
High, and higher, and yet more high,

Was gold and gold that glimmered through
The hollow vault, the vault of blue.

And then I knew that God was good,
And the world was fair. And, where I stood,

I bent the knee, and bent the head,
And said my prayers, and went to bed.

Father we thank Thee for the Night

ANONYMOUS

Father, we thank Thee for the night,
And for the pleasant morning light,
For rest and food and loving care,
And all that makes the world so fair.
Help us to do the thing we should,
To be to others kind and good,
In all we do, in all we say,
To grow more loving every day.

The Silver World

D. C. COLE

Last night, before I fell asleep,
The moon made patterns on the floor ;
And in my dreams I found myself
Standing upon her silver shore.

Her hills were tipped with silvery light,
Streams ran like molten silver by,

The buttercups were silver ones,
Each daisy had a silver eye.

The blackbird had a silver beak,
And piped a song so silver-clear,
A ring of little sylph-like elves
Stopped in their whirling dance to hear.

Softly they closed their moth-like wings :
Their garments shone like silver mist,
Their hair seemed almost silvery, too,
Entwined with pearl and amethyst.

But I was glad when I awoke,
And peeped this morning through the pane,
To see no more a silver world,
But find my golden one again.

The Mouse

ANONYMOUS

I'm only a poor little mouse, ma'am !
I live in the wall of your house, ma'am !

With a fragment of cheese, and a very few peas,
I was having a little carouse, ma'am !

No mischief at all I intend, ma'am !
I hope you will act as my friend, ma'am !
If my life you should take, many hearts you would break,
And the trouble would be without end, ma'am !

My wife lives there in the crack, ma'am !
She's waiting for me to go back, ma'am !
She hoped I might find a bit of a rind,
For the children their dinner do lack, ma'am !

I never was given to strife, ma'am !
(Don't look at that terrible knife, ma'am !)
The noise overhead that disturbs you in bed,
'Tis the *rats*, I'll venture my life, ma'am !

In your eyes I see mercy, I'm sure, ma'am !
Oh, there's no need to open the door, ma'am !
I'll slip through the crack, and I'll never come back,
I'll never come back any more, ma'am !

Mr. Nobody

ANONYMOUS

I know a funny little man,
As quiet as a mouse,
Who does the mischief that is done
In everybody's house.

There's no one ever sees his face,
And yet we all agree
That every plate we break is cracked
By Mr. Nobody.

'Tis he who always tears our books,
Who leaves our doors ajar ;
He pulls the buttons from our clothes,
And scatters pins afar.
That squeaking door will always squeak,
For prithee, don't you see ?—
We leave the oiling to be done
By Mr. Nobody.

He puts damp wood upon the fire
That kettles cannot boil ;
His are the feet that bring in mud,
And all the carpets soil.

The papers always are mislaid ;
Who had them last but he ?
There's no one tosses them about
But Mr. Nobody.

The finger-marks upon the doors
By none of us are made ;
We never leave the blinds unclosed
To let the curtains fade.
The ink we never spill ; the boots
That lying round you see
Are not our boots ; they all belong
To Mr. Nobody.

W-o-o-o-o-o-w !

NANCY M. HAYES

Away in the forest, all darksome and deep,
The wolves went a-hunting when men were asleep ;
And the cunning old wolves were so patient and wise,
As they taught the young cubs how to see with their eyes,
How to smell with their noses and hear with their ears,
And what a wolf hunts for and what a wolf fears.

Of danger they warned: "Cubs, you mustn't go there—
It's the home of the Grizzily-izzily Bear."
W-o-o-o-o-o-w!

The cubs in the pack very soon understood
If they followed the wolf law the hunting was good,
And the old wolves who'd hunted long winters ago
Knew better than they did the right way to go.
But one silly cub thought he always was right,
And he settled to do his *own* hunting one night.
He laughed at the warning—said *he* didn't care
For the Grizzily-izzily-izzily Bear!
W-o-o-o-o-o-w!

So, when all his elders were hot on the track,
"I'm off now!" he barked to the cubs of the pack
"I'll have some adventures—don't mind what you say!"
A wave of his paw—and he bounded away.
He bounded away till he came very soon
Where the edge of the forest lay white in the moon,
To what he'd been warned of—that terrible lair—
The haunt of the Grizzily-izzily Bear!
W-o-o-o-o-o-w!

He came . . . and what happened ? Alas ! to the pack
That poor silly wolf cub never came back.
And once, in a neat little heap on the ground,
The end of a tail and a whisker were found,
Some fur and a nose-tip—a bristle or two,
And the kindly old wolves shook their heads, for they knew
It was all of his nice little feast he could spare,
That Grizzily-izzily-izzily Bear !
W-o-o-o-o-o-w !

The Wind

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky ;
And all around I heard you pass,
Like ladies' skirts, across the grass—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song !

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid ;
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song !

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old ?
Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me ?
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song !

The Snare

JAMES STEPHENS

I HEAR a sudden cry of pain !
There is a rabbit in a snare :
Now I hear the cry again,
But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where
He is calling out for aid ;

Crying on the frightened air,
  Making everything afraid.

Making everything afraid,
  Wrinkling up his little face,
As he cries again for aid ;
  And I cannot find the place !

And I cannot find the place
  Where his paw is in the snare :
Little one ! Oh, little one !
  I am searching everywhere !

Robin Redbreast

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

Good-bye, good-bye to summer !
  For summer's nearly done ;
The garden smiling faintly,
  Cool breezes in the sun ;
Our thrushes now are silent,
  Our swallows flown away—
But Robin's here, in coat of brown,
  With ruddy breast-knot gay.

Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin, dear !
Robin singing sweetly
In the falling of the year.

Bright yellow, red and orange,
The leaves come down in hosts
The trees are Indian Princes,
But soon they'll turn to ghosts ;
The leathery pears and apples
Hang russet on the bough.
It's autumn, autumn, autumn late,
'Twill soon be winter now.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin, dear !
And welaway ! my Robin,
For pinching times are near.

The fireside for the cricket,
The wheat-stack for the mouse,
When trembling night-winds whistle
And moan all round the house.
The frosty ways like iron,
The branches plumed with snow—

Alas ! in winter, dead and dark,
Where can poor Robin go ?
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin, dear !
And a crumb of bread for Robin,
His little heart to cheer !

About the Fairies

ANONYMOUS

Pray, where are the little bluebells gone
That lately bloomed in the wood ?
Why, the little fairies have each taken one
And put it on for a hood.

And where are the pretty grass-stalks gone
That waved in the summer breeze ?
Oh, the fairies have taken them everyone,
To plant in their gardens as trees.

And where are the great big blue-bottles gone
That buzzed in their busy pride ?
Oh, the fairies have caught them everyone,
And have broken them in to ride.

And they've taken the glow-worms to light their
halls,
And the cricket to sing them a song ;
And the great red rose leaves to paper their walls,
And they're feasting the whole night long.

And when spring comes back, with its soft, mild ray,
And the ripple of gentle rain,
The fairies bring what they've taken away,
And give it us all again.

When You go to Fairyland

M. YOUNG

Once I went to Fairyland—but it's years and years
ago—
I wandered through a dusky wood when the moon
was shining low ;
I saw the fairies dancing, and they made me join
them too,
For when you go to Fairyland you must do as the
fairies do.

The fairy queen was beautiful. She wore a shimmery gown
All made of misty moonbeams, with starshine in her crown ;
The fairies bowed in front of her, so I made a curtsey too,
For when you go to Fairyland you must do as the fairies do.

I peeped at fairy babies in their wildrose cradles sleeping,
And I watched them gently rocking when the cool night wind came creeping,
Then I perched on a crimson toadstool, and I sipped some honeydew,
For when you go to Fairyland you must do as the fairies do.

They feasted me with fairy fruits, and they gave me fairy gold,
But they all trooped down a rabbit hole when the night was growing old ;
Oh, I *tried*, I *tried* to follow them, but I couldn't wriggle through :
So I came away, for in Fairyland you must do as the fairies do.

The Fairies have Never a Penny to Spend

ROSE FYLEMAN

THE fairies have never a penny to spend,
They haven't a thing put by,
But theirs is the dower of bird and of flower,
And theirs are the earth and the sky.
And though you should live in a palace of gold
Or sleep in a dried-up ditch,
You could never be poor as the fairies are,
And never as rich.

Since ever and ever the world began
They have danced like a ribbon of flame,
They have sung their song through the centuries long,
And yet it is never the same.
And though you be foolish or though you be wise,
With hair of silver or gold,
You could never be young as the fairies are,
And never as old.

The Pixie Piper

ANONYMOUS

THERE is a little piper who plays an elfin tune
In the sunlight and the moth-light and underneath the moon ;
If you know how to listen you're sure to hear him soon.

By hedge and barn and woodland, in city street or square,
You'll catch the pixie-piping, like star-dust in the air,
Of the little shy musician, so gay, so debonair.

He cares not how you seek him, in rags or tags or lace ;
You may limp out a beggar, or ride in royal grace ;
He will not flute his fancy unless he likes your face.

He will not play for silver, he will not play for gold ;
He will not play for man or maid whose heart is waxing cold ;
But if you love to listen you'll never *quite* grow old.

The Green Lady

C. D. COLE

A LOVELY Green Lady
  Embroiders and stitches
Sweet flowers in the meadows,
  On banks and in ditches.

All day she is sewing,
  Embroidering all night,
For she works in the darkness
  As well as the light.

She makes no mistake in
  The silks which she uses,
And all her gay colours
  She carefully chooses.

She fills nooks and corners
  With blossoms so small,
Where none but the fairies
  Will see them at all.

She sews them so quickly,
  She trims them so neatly,

Though much of her broidery
Is hidden completely.

She scatters her tapestry,
Scented and sweet,
In the loneliest places,
Or neath careless feet;

For bee, or for bird folk,
For children like me.
But the lovely Green Lady
No mortal may see.

The Hayfield

ROSE FYLEMAN

Over the field the fairies went,
Singing and dancing and well content;
Over the field of sweet warm grass
I saw their shimmering cohorts pass.

The clover flamed to a ruddier glow,
The slender buttercups curtseyed low,
The wondering daisies, innocent-eyed,
Bowed their heads to the radiant tide.

And flirting butterflies, pearly white,
Left the flowers for a new delight,
Left their loves for the fairies' sake,
And fluttered dizzily in their wake.

Over the swaying grass they swept,
Over the hedgerow soared and leapt,
Broke and scattered in golden spray,
Gleamed and glittered—and melted away

The Pedlar's Caravan

W. B. RANDS

I WISH I lived in a caravan,
With a horse to drive, like a pedlar-man !
Where he comes from nobody knows,
Or where he goes to, but on he goes !

His caravan has windows two,
And a chimney of tin, that the smoke comes through ;
He has a wife, with a baby brown,
And they go riding from town to town.

Chairs to mend, and delf to sell!
He clashes the basins like a bell;
Tea-trays, baskets ranged in order,
Plates, with alphabets round the border!

The roads are brown, and the sea is green,
But his house is like a bathing-machine;
The world is round, and he can ride,
Rumble and splash to the other side!

With the pedlar-man I should like to roam,
And write a book when I came home;
All the people would read my book,
Just like the Travels of Captain Cook!

The City Child

LORD TENNYSON

Dainty little maiden, whither would you wander?
Whither from this pretty home, the home where mother dwells?
"Far and far away," said the dainty little maiden,
"All among the gardens, auriculas, anemones,
Roses and lilies and Canterbury-bells."

Dainty little maiden, whither would you wander ?
Whither from this pretty house, this city-house of ours ?
" Far and far away," said the dainty little maiden,
" All among the meadows, the clover and clematis,
Daisies and kingcups and honeysuckle-flowers."

Hay Harvest

PATRICK R. CHALMERS

I MET a man mowing
A meadow of hay ;
So smoothly and flowing
His swathes fell away,
At break of day
Up Hambledon way ;
A yellow-eyed collie
Was guarding his coat—
Loose-limbed and lob-lolly,
But wise and remote.

The morning came leaping,
'Twas four o' the clock,
The world was still sleeping
At Hambledon lock—
As sound as a rock
Slept village and lock ;
" Fine morning ! " the man says,
And I says, " Fine day ! "
Then I to my fancies
And he to his hay.

And lovely and quiet
And lonely and chill,
Lay river and eyot,
And meadow and mill—
I think of them still—
Mead, river, and mill ;
For wasn't it jolly
With only us three—
The yellow-eyed collie,
The mower and me ?

The Lion

HILAIRE BELLOC

THE lion, the lion, he dwells in the waste ;
He has a big head, and a very small waist,
But his shoulders are stark, and his jaws they are grim,
And a good little child will not play with him.

The Rhinoceros

HILAIRE BELLOC

RHINOCEROS, your hide looks all undone,
You do not take my fancy in the least ;
You have a horn where other beasts have none ;
Rhinoceros, you are an ugly beast.

The Elephant

HILAIRE BELLOC

WHEN people call this beast to mind,
They marvel more and more
At such a LITTLE tail behind,
So LARGE a trunk before.

There was an Old Woman

ANONYMOUS

THERE was an old woman, as I have heard tell,
Who went to the market her eggs for to sell ;
She went to market all on a market day,
And fell fast asleep on the King's highway.

Then came by a pedlar whose name was John Stout,
And he cut her petticoats all round about ;
He cut all her petticoats up to the knees,
Which made this old woman to shiver and freeze.

When this poor old woman first did awake,
She began to shiver, and she began to shake ;
She began to wonder, and she began to cry
" Lawk-a-mercy on me, this is none of I."

" But if it be I, as I do hope it be,
I've a little dog at home, and he will sure know me ;
If it be I, he'll wag his little tail,
And if it be not I, he'll loudly bark and wail."

Home went the woman all in the dusk and dark,
Up got the little dog and he began to bark ;
He began to bark, and she began to cry,
" Lawk-a-mercy on me, this is none of I."

As Joseph was A-Walking

ANONYMOUS

As Joseph was a-walking
He heard an angel sing :
" This night shall be born
Our Heavenly King :

" He neither shall be born
In house nor in hall,
Nor in the place of Paradise,
But in an ox's stall :

" He neither shall be clothed
In purple nor in pall,
But all in fair linen,
As are babies all.

" He neither shall be rocked
In silver nor in gold,
But in a wooden cradle
That rocks on the mould.

" He neither shall be christened
In white wine or red,
But with fair spring water
With which we were christenèd."

Earl Haldan's Daughter

CHARLES KINGSLEY

It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
She looked across the sea ;
She looked across the water,
And long and loud laughed she :
" The locks of six princesses
Must be my marriage fee,
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat !
Who comes a-wooing me ! "

It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
She walked along the sand ;
When she was aware of a knight so fair,
Come sailing to the land.
His sails were all of velvet,
His mast of beaten gold,
And hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat !
Who saileth here so bold !

" The locks of five princesses
I won beyond the sea ;
I clipt their golden tresses,
To fringe a cloak for thee.

One handful yet is wanting,
  But one of all the tale ;
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat !
  Furl up thy velvet sail ! ”

He leapt into the water,
  That rover young and bold ;
He gript Earl Haldan’s daughter,
  He clipt her locks of gold ;
“ Go weep, go weep, proud maiden,
  The tale is full to-day.
Now hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat !
  Sail Westward Ho away ! ”

Kind Deeds

ISAAC WATTS

Little drops of water,
  Little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean,
  And the pleasant land.

Thus the little minutes,
  Humble though they be,

Make the mighty ages
Of eternity.

Little deeds of kindness,
Little words of love,
Make this earth an Eden
Like the heaven above.

How Doth the Little Busy Bee

ISAAC WATTS

How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey every day
From every opening flower!

How skilfully she builds her cell!
How neat she spreads her wax!
And labours hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes.

In work of labour or of skill
I would be busy too:
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

In books or work or healthful play,
  Let my first years be passed,
That I may give for every day
  Some good account at last.

All Things Bright and Beauteous

MRS. ALEXANDER

All things bright and beauteous,
  All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wondrous,
  The Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
  Each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colours,
  He made their tiny wings.

The purple-headed mountain,
  The river running by,
The sunset and the morning,
  That brightens up the sky ;

The cold wind in the winter,
The pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden,
He made them every one ;

The tall trees in the greenwood,
The meadows where we play,
The rushes by the water
We gather every day ;

He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty
Who has made all things well.

The Man in the Moon

FLORENCE HARRISON

" How did you climb there, Man in the Moon ?
Did anyone see you go ?
Do you sit alone on a golden throne,
And handle a silver bow ?
With a shooting star do you aim afar
At the sleepy world below ?"

" Once of old," said the Man in the Moon,
" I lived in the world so free,
And I met a fay, at the dim of the day,
Who gave me of wishes three,
So I made bold to ask for the gold
And the jewels of Faëry.

" But woe is me for those wishes two !
I hid my gain in the glen ;
But the trees had eyes, and the rats were spies,
With raven, and rook, and wren,
And I feared the hands of the robber bands,
And a world of hungry men.

" So I wished the last of my wishes three,
And the wish was granted soon ;
As I dreaded earth with its toil and mirth,
And the birds that peep and croon,
I wished myself and my fairy pelf
Were up in the empty moon.

" So here in the misty moon I pine
As long as the fairy wills,
And I powder your old green earth with gold,
And silver the seas and rills,

Till the water's bright, and the land's alight
With the gorse and the daffodils.

'But no one thinks, for the gold I fling,
To send me a brave balloon;
Though the lovers gaze and the poets praise
My ways in many a rune,
They never try, till the day they die,
To bring the Man from the Moon."

Moon Magic

PAMELA TENNANT

One day when Father and I had been
To sell our sheep at Berwick green,
We reached the farm house late at night,
A great moon rising round and bright.

Her strange beam shed on all around
Bewitched the trees and streams and ground,
Changing the willows beyond the stacks
To little old men with crouching backs.

To-day the sun was shining plain ;
They all were pollarded willows again.
But at night—do you believe they're trees ?
They're little old men with twisted knees.

Robert of Lincoln

W. C. BRYANT

Merrily swinging on brier and weed
  Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
  Robert of Lincoln is telling his name :
    " Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink ;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours
Hidden among the summer flowers.
    Chee, chee, chee ! "

Robert of Lincoln is gaily drest,
  Wearing a bright black wedding-coat ;
White are his shoulders and white his crest.
  Hear him call in his merry note :
    " Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink ;

Look what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee ! ”

Robert of Lincoln’s Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
Broods in the grass while her husband sings :
“ Bob-o’-link, bob-o’-link,
Spink, spank, spink ;
Brood, kind creature ; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee ! ”

Modest and shy as a nun is she ;
One weak chirp is her only note ;
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat :
“ Bob-o’-link, bob-o’-link,
Spink, spank, spink ;
Never was I afraid of man :
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can !
Chee, chee, chee ! ”

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight !

There as a mother sits all day,
Robert is singing with all his might :
" Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink ;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee ! "

Soon as the little ones chip the shell,
Six wide mouths are open for food ;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood :
" Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink ;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee ! "

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work and silent with care ;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air :
" Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink ;

Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee ! ”

Summer wanes ; the children are grown ;
Fun and frolic no more he knows :
Robert of Lincoln’s a humdrum crone ;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes :
“ Bob-o’-link, bob-o’-link,
Spink, spank, spink ;
When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee ! ”

The Pirates’ Song

JOHN MASEFIELD

We are far from sight of the harbour lights
Of the sea-ports whence we came,
But the old sea calls and the cold wind bites,
And our hearts are turned to flame.

And merry and rich is the goodly gear
We'll win on the tossing sea,
A silken gown for my dainty dear,
And a gold doubloon for me.

It's the old, old road and the old, old quest
Of the cut-throat sons of Cain,
South by west and a quarter west,
And hey ! for the Spanish Main.

The Poppies in the Garden

FFRIDA WOLFE

The poppies in the garden, they all wear frocks of silk,
Some are purple, some are pink, and others white as milk.
Light ! light for dancing in ! for dancing when the breeze
Plays a little two-step for the blossoms and the bees ;
Light ! light for dancing in ! all frilly at the hem !
Oh ! when I watch the poppies dance, I long to dance with them.

The poppies in the garden have let their silk frocks fall
All about the border paths, but where are they at all ?
Here a frill, and there a flounce, a rag of silky red,
But not a poppy girl is left—I think they've gone to bed,
Gone to bed and gone to sleep ; and weary must they be,
For each has left her box of dreams upon the stem for me.

Autumn Song

W. B. RANDS

The ash-berry clusters are darkly red ;
The leaves of the limes are almost shed ;
The passion-flower hangs out her yellow fruit ;
The sycamore puts on her brownest suit.

After a silence the wind complains,
Like a creature longing to burst its chains ;
The swallows are gone, I saw them gather,
I heard them murmuring of the weather.

The clouds move fast, the south is blowing,
The sun is slanting, the year is going ;
O I love to walk where the leaves lie dead,
And hear them rustle beneath my tread !

The Merry Fay

GEORGE DARLEY

O WHO is so merry, so merry, heigh ho !
As the light-hearted fairy, heigh ho ?
  He dances and sings
  To the sound of his wings,
With a Hey ! and a Heigh ! and a Ho !

O who is so merry, so airy, heigh ho !
As the light-headed fairy, heigh ho ?
  His nectar he sips
  From the primrose's lips,
With a Hey ! and a Heigh ! and a Ho !

O who is so merry, so wary, heigh ho !
As the light-footed fairy, heigh ho ?
  His night is the noon,
  And his sun is the moon,
With a Hey ! and a Heigh ! and a Ho !

Sea Secrets

NORMAN AULT

A LITTLE pearly shell
  Beside the sea,
What can it tell—
  What will it say to me ?

Held close beside my ear,
  It whispers then ;
And I can hear
  The tales it tells again.

It tells of lands below
  The dancing waves,
Where no winds blow
  Among the coral caves.

Where, on his throne all day,
  The sea king sees
Strange fishes play
  Among the seaweed trees.

Where, combing their long hair,
  The mermaids sing

Sweet sea-songs there
  Around the old sea king.

Where great sea-serpents are,
  That never sleep,
But near and far
  Drive thundering through the deep.

Where come those ships at last,
  Which left the shore
Gaily, and passed
  From sight for evermore.

A little pearly shell
  Beside the sea
Has tales to tell,
  And tells them all to me.

The Miller of the Dee

CHARLES MACKAY

There dwelt a miller hale and bold
  Beside the River Dee ;
He worked and sang from morn to night,
  No lark more blithe than he :

And this the burden of his song
For ever used to be :
" I envy nobody, no, not I,
And nobody envies me ! "

" Thou'rt wrong, my friend," said old King Hal,
" Thou'rt wrong as wrong can be ;
For could my heart be light as thine,
I'd gladly change with thee.
And tell me now what makes thee sing
With voice so loud and free,
While I am sad, though I'm the King,
Beside the River Dee ? "

The miller smiled and doffed his cap :
" I earn my bread," quoth he ;
" I love my wife, I love my friends,
I love my children three ;
I owe no penny I cannot pay,
I thank the River Dee,
That turns the mill that grinds the corn
That feeds my babes and me."

" Good friend," said Hal, and sighed the while,
" Farewell, and happy be ;

But say no more, if thou'dst be true,
That no one envies thee.
Thy mealy cap is worth my crown,
Thy mill my kingdom's fee :
Such men as thou are England's boast,
O miller of the Dee ! "

The Windmill

H. W. LONGFELLOW

Behold, a giant am I !
Aloft here in my tower,
With my granite jaws I devour
The maize, and the wheat, and the rye,
And grind them into flour.

I look down over the farms ;
In the fields of green I see
The harvest that is to be,
And I fling to the air my arms,
For I know it is all for me.

I stand here in my place,
With my foot on the rock below,
And whichever way it may blow,
I meet it face to face,
As a brave man meets his foe.

And while we wrestle and strive,
My master, the miller, stands
And feeds me with his hands ;
For he knows what makes him thrive,
And makes him lord of lands.

I hear the sound of flails,
Far off, from the threshing-floors
In barns, with their open doors,
And the wind, the wind in my sails
Louder and louder roars.

On Sundays I take my rest ;
Churchgoing bells begin
Their low melodious din ;
I cross my hands on my breast,
And all is peace within.

Big Steamers

RUDYARD KIPLING

"Oh, where are you going to, all you Big Steamers,
With England's own coal, up and down the salt seas?"
"We are going to fetch you your bread and your butter,
Your beef, pork, and mutton, eggs, apples and cheese."

"And where will you fetch it from, all you Big Steamers,
And where shall I write you when you are away?"
"We fetch it from Melbourne, Quebec and Vancouver,
Address us at Hobart, Hong-Kong and Bombay."

"But if anything happens to all you Big Steamers,
And suppose you were wrecked up and down the salt sea?"
"Why, you'd have no coffee or bacon for breakfast,
And you'd have no muffins or toast for your tea."

"Then I'll pray for fine weather for all you Big Steamers,
For little blue billows and breezes so soft."
"Oh, billows and breezes don't bother Big Steamers,
For we're iron below and steel-rigging aloft."

"Then I'll build a new lighthouse for all you Big Steamers,
With plenty wise pilots to pilot you through."
"Oh, the Channel's as bright as a ballroom already,
And pilots are thicker than pilchards at Looe."

"Then what can I do for you, all you Big Steamers,
Oh, what can I do for your comfort and good?"
"Send out your big warships to watch your big waters,
That no one may stop us from bringing you food.

"*For the bread that you eat and the biscuits you nibble,*
The sweets that you suck and the joints that you carve,
They are brought to you daily by all us Big Steamers,
And if any one hinders our coming you'll starve!"

From a Railway Carriage

R. L. STEVENSON

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,
Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches,
And charging along like troops in a battle,
All through the meadows the horses and cattle :
All of the sights of the hill and the plain
Fly as thick as driving rain ;
And ever again, in the wink of an eye,
Painted stations whistle by.

Here is a child who clambers and scrambles,
All by himself and gathering brambles ;
Here is a tramp who stands and gazes ;
And there is the green for stringing the daisies !
Here is a cart run away in the road,
Lumping along with man and load ;
And here is a mill, and there is a river :
Each a glimpse and gone for ever !

The Night Wind

EUGENE FIELD

Have you ever heard the wind go " Yooooo " ?
'Tis a pitiful sound to hear !
It seems to chill you through and through
With a strange and speechless fear.
'Tis the voice of the night that broods outside
When folk should be asleep,
And many and many's the time I've cried
To the darkness brooding far and wide
Over the land and the deep :
" Whom do you want, O lonely night,
That you wait the long hours through ? "
And the night would say in its ghostly way :
" Yooooooo !
Yooooooo !
Yooooooo ! "

My mother told me long ago
(When I was a little lad)
That when the night went wailing so,
Somebody had been bad ;
And then, when I was snug in bed,
Whither I had been sent,

With the blankets pulled up round my head,
I'd think of what my mother said,
  And wonder what boy she meant.
And " Who's been bad to-day ? " I'd ask
  Of the wind that hoarsely blew,
And the voice would say in its meaningful way :
    " Yoooooooo !
    Yoooooooo !
    Yoooooooo ! "

That this was true I must allow—
  You'll not believe it, though—
Yes, though I'm quite a model now,
  I was not always so ;
And if you doubt the things I say,
  Suppose you make the test :
Suppose that you've been bad some day
And up to bed are sent away
  From mother and the rest—
Suppose you ask " Who has been bad ? "
  And then you'll hear what's true ;
For the wind will moan in its ruefullest tone :
    " Yoooooooo !
    Yoooooooo !
    Yoooooooo ! "

The Wind in a Frolic

WILLIAM HOWITT

The wind one morning sprang up from sleep,
Saying, " Now for a frolic ! now for a leap !
Now for a mad-cap galloping chase !
I'll make a commotion in every place ! "
So it swept with a bustle right through the town,
Crashing the signs and scattering down
Shutters ; and whisking, with merciless squalls,
Old women's bonnets and gingerbread stalls.
There never was heard a lustier shout,
As the apples and oranges trundled about ;
And the urchins that stand with their thievish eyes
For ever on watch ran off each with a prize.

Then away to the fields it went, blustering and humming,
And the cattle all wondered whatever was coming ;
It plucked by the tails the grave matronly cows,
And tossed the colts' manes all over their brows ;
Till, offended at such an unusual salute,
They all turned their backs and stood sulky and mute.

Then it rushed like a monster on cottage and farm,
Striking their dwellers with sudden alarm,
And they ran out like bees in a midsummer swarm ;
There were dames with their kerchiefs tied over
their caps,
To see if their poultry were free from mishaps ;
The turkeys they gobbled, the geese screamed
aloud ;
The hens crept to roost in a terrified crowd ;
There was placing of ladders, and logs laying on,
Where the thatch from the roof threatened soon
to be gone.

But the wind had swept on, and had met in a lane
With a schoolboy, who panted and struggled in
vain ;
For it tossed him and twirled him, then passed, and
he stood
With his hat in a pool and his shoes in the mud.

Then away went the wind in its holiday glee,
And now it was far on the billowy sea,
And the lordly ships felt its staggering blow,
And the little boats darted to and fro.

But lo ! it was night, and it sank to rest
On the sea-bird's rock in the gleaming west,
Laughing to think, in its fearful fun,
How little of mischief it really had done.

A Boy's Song

JAMES HOGG

Where the pools are bright and deep,
Where the grey trout lies asleep,
Up the river and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest,
There to track the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away
Little sweet maidens from the play,
Or love to banter and fight so well,
That's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play
Through the meadow, among the hay ;
Up the water and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Hie Away

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Hie away, hie away,
Over bank and over brae,
Where the copsewood is the greenest,
Where the fountains glisten sheenest,
Where the lady-fern grows strongest,
Where the morning dew lies longest,
Where the blackcock sweetest sips it.

Where the fairy latest trips it ;
Hie to haunts right seldom seen,
Lovely, lonesome, cool, and green,
Over bank and over brae,
Hie away, hie away !

Where the Bee Sucks

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Where the bee sucks, there suck I ;
In a cowslip's bell I lie :
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily shall I live now
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

The Cuckoo

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Now daisies pied, and violets blue,
And lady-smocks all silver white,

And cuckoo-buds so pale of hue
  Do paint the meadows with delight.
The cuckoo now on every tree
Sings cuckoo, cuckoo.

War Song

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
  Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
  Summon clan Conuil.
Come away, come away,
  Hark to the summons !
Come in your war array,
  Gentles and Commons.

Come from deep glen, and
  From mountain so rocky,
The war-pipe and pennon
  Are at Inverlochy.
Come every hill-plaid and
  True heart that wears one,
Come every steel-blade and
  Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter ;
Leave the corpse uninterred,
The bride at the altar ;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges :
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come when
Forests are rended,
Come as the waves come when
Navies are stranded :
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page and groom,
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come ;
See how they gather !
Wide waves the eagle plume,
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward, each man, set !
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Knell for the onset !

My Heart's in the Highlands

ROBERT BURNS

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here ;
My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer ;
A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe—
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.
Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North !
The birthplace of valour, the country of worth ;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.

Farewell to the mountains high covered with snow !
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below !
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods !
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods !
My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here.
My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer ;
A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe—
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

Frolic

A. E.

The children were shouting together
And racing along the sands,
A glimmer of dancing shadows,
A dovelike flutter of hands.

The stars were shouting in heaven,
The dew was chasing the moon :
The game was the same as the children's,
They danced to the self-same tune.

The whole of the world was merry,
One joy from the vale to the height,
Where the blue woods of twilight encircled
The lovely lawns of the light.

A March Day

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

The cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green fields sleep in the sun ;

The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest ;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising ;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill ;
The ploughboy is whooping "Anon, anon!"
There's joy in the mountains,
There's life in the fountains ;
Small clouds are sailing ;
Blue sky prevailing ;
The rain is over and gone !

Pink Almond

KATHARINE TYNAN

So delicate, so airy,
The almond on the tree,
Pink stars that some good fairy
Has made for you and me.

A little cloud of roses,
  All in a world of gray,
The almond flower uncloses
  Upon the wild March day.

A mist of roses blowing
  The way of fog and sleet,
A dust of roses showing
  For gray dust in the street.

Pink snow upon the branches,
  Pink snow-flakes falling down,
In rosy avalanches,
  Upon the dreary town.

A rain, a shower of roses,
  All in a roseless day,
The almond tree uncloses
  Her roses on the gray.

Cuckoo

KATHARINE TYNAN

His voice runs before me ; I follow ; it flies ;
It is now in the meadow and now in the skies ;

So blithesome, so lightsome ; now distant, now here ;
And when he calls " Cuckoo ! " the summer is near.

He calls back the roses, red roses, that went
At the first blast of winter, so sad and forespent,
With the dew in their bosoms, young roses and dear,
And when he calls ' Cuckoo ! " the summer is near.

I would twine him a gold cage, but what would he do
For his world of the emerald, his bath in the blue ?
And his wee feathered comrades to make him good
cheer ?
And when he calls " Cuckoo ! " the summer is near.

Now, blackbird, give over your harping of gold !
Brown thrush and green linnet, your music withhold !
The flutes of the forest are silver and clear,
But when he calls " Cuckoo ! " the summer is here.

The Procession of Flowers

SYDNEY DOBELL

First came the primrose,
On the bank, high,
Like a maiden looking forth
From the window of a tower

When the battle rolls below,
So looked she,
And saw the storms go by.

Then came the wind-flower
In the valley left behind,
As a wounded maiden, pale
With purple streaks of woe,
When the battle has rolled by,
Wanders to and fro,
So tottered she,
Dishevell'd in the wind.

Then came the daisies,
On the first of May,
Like a bannered show's advance,
While the crowd runs by the way,
With ten thousand flowers they came
Trooping through the fields.
As a happy people come,
So came they,
As a happy people come
When the war has rolled away,
With dance and tabor, pipe and drum,
And all make holiday.

Then came the cowslip,
Like a dancer in the fair,
She spread her little mat of green,
And on it dancéd she,
With a fillet bound about her brow,
A golden fillet round her brow,
And rubies in her hair.

Spring

THOMAS NASH

Spring, the sweet spring, is the year's pleasant king :
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring ;
Cold doth not sting ; the pretty birds do sing :
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo !

The palm and may make country houses gay ;
Lambs frisk and play ; the shepherds pipe all day ;
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay :
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo !

The fields breathe sweet ; the daisies kiss our feet ;
Young lovers meet ; old wives a-sunning sit ;

In every street these tunes our ears do greet :
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo !
Spring, the sweet spring !

Summer

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

Winter is cold-hearted,
Spring is yea-and-nay,
Autumn is a weather-cock
Blown every way.
Summer days for me
When every leaf is on its tree ;

When Robin's not a beggar,
And Jenny Wren's a bride,
And larks hang singing, singing, singing
Over the wheat-fields wide,
And anchored lilies ride,
And the pendulum spider
Swings from side to side ;

And blue-black beetles transact business,
And gnats fly in a host,

And furry caterpillars hasten
That no time be lost,
And moths grow fat and thrive,
And ladybirds arrive.

Before green apples blush,
Before green nuts embrown,
Why, one day in the country
Is worth a month in town ;
Is worth a day and a year
Of the dusty, musty, lag-last fashion
That days drone elsewhere.

The Brook

LORD TENNYSON

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

I wind about and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling ;

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges ;
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles ;
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret,
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me as I travel

With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river ;
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers ;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows ;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses ;
I linger by my shingly bars ;
I loiter round my cresses ;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river ;
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

Mamble

JOHN DRINKWATER

I NEVER went to Mamble
That lies above the Teme,
So I wonder who's in Mamble,
And whether people seem
Who breed and brew along there
As lazy as the name,
And whether any song there
Sets alehouse wits aflame.

The finger-post says Mamble,
And that is all I know
Of the narrow road to Mamble;
And should I turn and go
To that place of lazy token,
That lies above the Teme,
There might be a Mamble broken
That was lissom in a dream.

So leave the road to Mamble
And take another road
To as good a place as Mamble,
Be it lazy as a toad;

Who travels Worcester county
  Takes any place that comes,
When April tosses bounty
  To the cherries and the plums.

On the Hearthrug

M. E. COLERIDGE

"Little tongue of red-brown flame,
Whither go you?"—"Whence I came
Sending on a courier spark
To explore the chimney dark.

"Once I was a sunbeam fair,
Dashing through the awakened air.
Quickly to a green leaf gone,
On a forest tree I shone.

"Steely lightning struck the bough,
And I sank into a slough.
Many ages there I lay,
Ere I saw the all-father, Day.

"Now I sparkle once again,
Flashing light and warmth to men,
Ere, like all things that are bright,
I rejoin the all-mother, Night."

The Dumb Soldier

R. L. STEVENSON

When the grass was closely mown,
Walking on the lawn alone,
In the turf a hole I found,
And hid a soldier underground.

Spring and daisies came apace;
Grasses hide my hiding-place;
Grasses run like a green sea
O'er the lawn up to my knee.

Under grass alone he lies,
Looking up with leaden eyes,
Scarlet coat and pointed gun,
To the stars and to the sun.

When the grass is ripe like grain,
When the scythe is stoned again,
When the lawn is shaven clear,
Then my hole shall reappear.

I shall find him, never fear,
I shall find my grenadier ;
But, for all that's gone and come,
I shall find my soldier dumb.

He has lived, a little thing,
In the grassy woods of spring ;
Done, if he could tell me true,
Just as I should like to do.

He has seen the starry hours,
And the springing of the flowers ;
And the fairy things that pass
In the forests of the grass.

In the silence he has heard
Talking bee and lady-bird,
And the butterfly has flown
O'er him as he lay alone.

Not a word will he disclose,
Not a word of all he knows.
I must lay him on the shelf
And make up the tale myself.

A Hunting Song

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Waken, lords and ladies gay !
On the mountain dawns the day ;
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk, and horse, and hunting spear ;
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
Waken, lords and ladies gay !

Waken, lords and ladies gay !
The mist has left the mountain gray ;
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming,

And foresters have busy been,
To track the buck in thicket green ;
Now we come to chant our lay,
" Waken, lords and ladies gay ! "

Waken, lords and ladies gay !
To the greenwood haste away ;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot, and tall of size.
We can show the marks he made
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed ;
You shall see him brought to bay :
Waken, lords and ladies gay !

Louder, louder, shout the lay,
" Waken, lords and ladies gay ! "
Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee
Run a course as well as we ;
Time, stern huntsman, who can baulk,
Staunch as hound and fleet as hawk ?
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

The Witch

PERCY H. ILOTT

I saw her plucking cowslips,
And marked her where she stood ;
She never knew I watched her
While hiding in the wood.

Her skirt was brightest crimson,
And black her steeple hat ;
Her broom-stick lay beside her,
I'm positive of that.

Her chin was sharp and pointed,
Her eyes were—I don't know—
For, when she turned towards me—
I thought it best—to go.

As Lucy went A-Walking

WALTER DE LA MARE

As Lucy went a-walking one morning cold and fine
There sate three crows upon a tree, and three times
three is nine ;

Then "O!" said Lucy in the snow, "it's very plain to see
A witch has been a-walking in the fields in front of me."

Then stept she light and heedfully across the frozen snow,
And plucked a bunch of elder-twigs that near a pool did grow;
And by and by she comes to seven shadows in one place,
Stretched black by seven poplar trees against the sun's bright face.

She looks to left, she looks to right, and in the midst she sees
A little pool of water clear and frozen 'neath the trees;
Then down beside its margent in the crusty snow she kneels,
And hears a magic belfry a-ringing with sweet bells.

Clear rang the faint, far, merry peal, then silence on the air,

And icy-still the frozen pool and poplars standing there ;
Then lo ! as Lucy turned her head and looked along the snow
She sees a witch—a witch she sees, come frisking to and fro.

Her scarlet buckled shoes they clicked, her heels a-twinkling high ;
With mistletoe her steeple hat bobbed as she capered by ;
But never a dint, or mark, or print on the whiteness for to see,
Though danced she high, though danced she fast, though danced she lissomely.

It seemed 'twas diamonds in the air, or little flakes of frost ;
It seemed 'twas golden smoke around, or sunbeams lightly tossed ;
It seemed an elfin music like to reeds and warblers rose.
" Nay," Lucy said, " it is the wind that through the branches flows."

And as she peeps, and as she peeps, 'tis no more one, but three,
And eye of bat, and downy wing of owl within the tree,
And the bells of that sweet belfry a-pealing as before ;
And now it is not three she sees, and now it is not four.

" O ! who are ye," sweet Lucy cries, " that in a dreadful ring
All muffled up in brindled shawls do caper, frisk and spring ? "
" A witch, and witches, one and nine," they straight to her reply,
And looked upon her narrowly, with green and needling eye.

Then Lucy sees in clouds of gold green cherry trees upgrow,
And bushes of red roses that bloomed above the snow ;
She smells, all faint, the almond-boughs blowing so cold and fair,

And doves with milky eyes ascend fluttering in the air.

Clear flowers she sees, like tulip buds, go floating by like birds,
With wavering tips that warbled sweetly strange, enchanted words ;
And, as with ropes of amethyst, the boughs with lamps were hung,
And clusters of green emeralds like fruit upon them clung.

" O witches nine, ye dreadful nine ; O witches seven and three !
Whence come these wondrous things that I this Christmas morning see ? "
But straight, as in a clap, when she of *Christmas* says the word—
Here is the snow, and there the sun, but never bloom nor bird ;

Nor warbling flame, nor gloaming rope of amethyst there shows,
Nor bunches of green emeralds, nor belfry, well, and rose,

Nor cloud of gold, nor cherry-tree, nor witch in
brindled shawl,
But like a dream that vanishes, so vanished were
they all.

When Lucy sees, and only sees three crows upon a
bough,
And earthly twigs, and bushes hidden white in
driven snow,
Then " Oh," said Lucy, " three times three is nine
—I plainly see
Some witch has been a-walking in the fields in
front of me."

Come unto these Yellow Sands

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Come unto these yellow sands
And then take hands ;
Curtsied when you have, and kissed
The wild waves whist,

Foot it featly here and there,
And, sweet sprites, the burden bear.
  Hark ! hark !
  Bow-wow !
The watch-dogs bark :
  Bow-wow !
Hark ! hark ! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer,
  Cock-a-diddle-dow !

First Spring Morning

ROBERT BRIDGES

Look ! Look ! the spring is come :
  O feel the gentle air,
That wanders thro' the boughs to burst
  The thick buds everywhere !
  The birds are glad to see
  The high unclouded sun :
Winter is fled away, they sing,
  The gay time is begun.

Adown the meadows green
Let us go dance and play,
And look for violets in the lane,
And ramble far away
To gather primroses,
That in the woodland grow,
And hunt for oxlips, or if yet
The blades of bluebells show.

There the old woodman gruff
Hath half the coppice cut,
And weaves the hurdles all day long
Beside his willow hut.
We'll steal on him, and then
Startle him, all with glee
Singing our song of winter fled
And summer soon to be.

The Land of Story Books

R. L. STEVENSON

At evening when the lamp is lit,
Around the fire my parents sit ;

They sit at home and talk and sing,
And do not play at anything.

Now, with my little gun, I crawl
All in the dark along the wall,
And follow round the forest track
Away behind the sofa back.

There, in the night, where none can spy,
All in my hunter's camp I lie,
And play at books that I have read
Till it is time to go to bed.

These are the hills, these are the woods,
These are my starry solitudes ;
And there the river by whose brink
The roaring lions come to drink.

I see the others far away,
As if in firelit camp they lay,
And I, like to an Indian scout,
Around their party prowled about.

So, when my nurse comes in for me,
Home I return across the sea,
And go to bed with backward looks
At my dear land of story-books.

Epitaph on a Robin Redbreast

SAMUEL ROGERS

TREAD lightly here, for here, 'tis said,
When piping winds are hushed around,
A small note wakes from underground,
Where now his tiny bones are laid.
No more in lone or leafless groves,
With ruffled wing and faded breast,
His friendless, homeless spirit roves ;
Gone to the world where birds are blest !
Where never cat glides o'er the green,
Or schoolboy's giant form is seen ;
But love and joy and smiling spring
Inspire their little souls to sing !

A Child's Dream

FRANCES COMFORD

I HAD a little dog, and my dog was very small ;
He licked me in the face, and he answered to my call;
Of all the treasures that were mine, I loved him
most of all.

His nose was fresh as morning dew and blacker than the night ;
I thought that it could even snuff the shadows and the light ;
And his tail he held bravely, like a banner in a fight.

His body covered thick with hair was very good to smell ;
His little stomach underneath was pink as any shell ;
And I loved him and honoured him, more than words can tell.

We ran out in the morning, both of us, to play,
Up and down, across the fields for all the sunny day ;
But he ran so swiftly—he ran right away.

I looked for him, I called him entreatingly. Alas !
The dandelions could not speak, though they had seen him pass,
And nowhere was his waving tail among the waving grass.

I called him in a thousand ways, and yet he did not
come ;
The pathways and the hedges were horrible and
dumb.
I prayed to God, who never heard : my desperate
soul grew numb.

The sun sank low. I ran ; I prayed : " If God has
not the power
To find him, let me die. I cannot bear another
hour,"
When suddenly I came upon a great yellow flower.

And all among its petals, such was heaven's grace,
In that golden hour, in that golden place,
All among its petals, was his hairy face.

The Owl

LORD TENNYSON

When cats run home and light is come,
And dew is cold upon the ground,

And the far-off stream is dumb,
And the whirring sail goes round,
And the whirring sail goes round ;
Alone, and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch
Twice or thrice his roundelay,
Twice or thrice his roundelay ;
Alone, and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits

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Book Three

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SELECTED BY

H. N. ALTON

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Winter

LORD TENNYSON

The frost is here,
And fuel is dear,
And woods are sear,
And fires burn clear,
And frost is here,
And has bitten the heel of the going year.

Bite, frost, bite !
You roll up away from the light
The blue wood-louse and the plump dormouse,
And the bees are stilled and the flies are killed,
And you bite far into the heart of the house,
But not into mine.

Bite, frost, bite !
The woods are all the searer,
The fuel is all the dearer,
The fires are all the clearer,
My spring is all the nearer,
You have bitten into the heart of the earth,
But not into mine.

Primroses

ALFRED AUSTIN

Latest, earliest of the year,
Primroses that still were here,
Snugly nestling round the boles
Of the cut-down chestnut poles,
When December's tottering head
Rustled 'mong the deep leaves dead,
Other lovely things are rare,
You are prodigal as fair.
First you come by ones and ones,
Lastly in battalions.
Skirmish along hedge and bank,
Turn old winter's wavering flank,
Round his flying footsteps hover,
Seize on hollow, ridge, and cover,
Leave nor slope nor hill unharried,
Till, his snowy trenches carried,
O'er his sepulchre you laugh
Winter's joyous epitaph.

Ere the hardy crocus cleaves
Sunny border 'neath the eaves,
Ere the thrush his song rehearse,
Sweeter than all poet's verse,
Ere the early bleating lambs
Cling like shadows to their dams,

Ere the blackthorn breaks to white,
Snowy-hooded anchorite,
Out from every hedge you look,
You are bright by every brook,
Wearing for your sole defence
Fearlessness of innocence.
Then, when your sweet task is done,
And the wild-flowers, one by one,
Here, there, everywhere do blow,
Primroses, you haste to go,
Satisfied with what you bring,
Fading morning-stars of spring.
You have brightened doubtful days,
You have sweetened long delays,
Fooling our enchanted reason
To miscalculate the season.
But when doubt and fear are fled,
When the kine leave wintry shed,
And 'mid grasses green and tall
Find their fodder, make their stall ;
When the wintering swallow flies
Homeward back from southern skies,
To the dear old cottage thatch
Where it loves to build and hatch,
That its young may understand,
Nor forget, this English land ;
When the cuckoo, mocking rover,
Laughs that April loves are over,

When the hawthorn, all ablow,
Mimics the defeated snow ;
Then you give one last look round,
Stir the sleepers underground,
Call the campion to awake,
Tell the speedwell courage take,
Bid the eyebright have no fear,
Whisper in the bluebell's ear
Time has come for it to flood
With its blue waves all the wood,
Mind the stitchwort of its pledge
To replace you in the hedge,
Bid the ladysmocks good-bye,
Close your bonnie lids and die ;
And, without one look of blame,
Go as gently as you came.

An April Morning

BLISS CARMAN

Once more in misted April
The world is growing green ;
Along the winding river
The plumey willows lean.

Beyond the sweeping meadows
The looming mountains rise
Like battlements of dreamland
Against the brooding skies.

In every wooded valley
The buds are breaking through,
As though the heart of all things
No languor ever knew.

The golden-wings and blue-birds
Call to their heavenly choirs ;
The pines are blued and drifted
With smoke of brushwood fires.

And in my sister's garden,
Where little breezes run,
The golden daffodilies
Are blowing in the sun.

April's Charms

W. H. DAVIES

When April scatters coins of primrose gold
Among the copper leaves in thickets old,
And singing skylarks from the meadows rise,
To twinkle like black stars in sunny skies ;

When I can hear the small woodpecker ring
Time on a tree for all the birds that sing ;
And hear the pleasant cuckoo, loud and long—
The simple bird that thinks two notes a song ;

When I can hear the woodland brook, that could
Not drown a babe, with all its threatening mood ;
Upon whose banks the violets make their home,
And let a few small strawberry blossoms come ;

When I go forth on such a pleasant day,
One breath outdoors takes all my care away ;
It goes like heavy smoke, when flames take hold
Of wood that's green, and fill a grate with gold.

Time, You Old Gipsy Man

RALPH HODGSON

Time, you old gipsy man,
  Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan,
  Just for one day ?

All things I'll give you
  Will you be my guest ;
Bells for your jennet,
  Of silver the best.
Goldsmiths shall beat you
  A great golden ring,
Peacocks shall bow to you,
  Little boys sing ;
Oh, and sweet girls will
  Festoon you with may ;
Time, you old gipsy,
  Why hasten away ?

Last week in Babylon,
  Last night in Rome,
Morning, and in the crush
  Under Paul's dome ;
Under Paul's dial
  You tighten your rein—

Only a moment,
And off once again ;
Off to some city
Now blind in the womb,
Off to another
Ere that's in the tomb.

Time, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan,
Just for one day ?

Tewkesbury Road

JOHN MASEFIELD

It is good to be out on the road, and going one knows not where,
Going through meadow and village, one knows not whither nor why ;
Through the grey light drift of the dust, in the keen cool rush of the air,
Under the flying white clouds, and the broad blue lift of the sky ;

And to halt at the chattering brook, in the tall green fern at the brink
Where the harebell grows, and the gorse, and the foxgloves purple and white ;

Where the shy-eyed delicate deer come down in a troop
to drink,
When the stars are mellow and large at the coming on
of the night.

O, to feel the warmth of the rain, and the homely smell of
the earth,
Is a tune for the blood to jig to, a joy past power of
words ;
And the blessed green comely meadows seem all a-ripple
with mirth
At the lilt of the shifting feet and the dear wild cry
of the birds.

The Sea

BARRY CORNWALL

The sea, the sea, the open sea,
The blue, the fresh, the ever free !
Without a mark, without a bound,
It runneth the earth's wide regions round ;
It plays with the clouds ; it mocks the skies,
Or like a cradled creature lies.

I'm on the sea ! I'm on the sea !
I am where I would ever be ;
With the blue above, and the blue below,

And silence wheresoe'er I go ;
If a storm should come and awake the deep,
What matter ? I shall ride and sleep.

I love—oh, how I love !—to ride
On the fierce, foaming, bursting tide,
When every mad wave drowns the moon
Or whistles aloft his tempest tune,
And tells how goeth the world below,
And why the sou'west blasts do blow.

I never was on the dull, tame shore,
But I loved the great sea more and more,
And backward flew to her billowy breast,
Like a bird that seeketh its mother's nest ;
And a mother she was and is to me,
For I was born on the open sea.

The waves were white, and red the morn
In the noisy hour when I was born ;
And the whale it whistled, the porpoise rolled,
And the dolphins bared their backs of gold ;
And never was heard such an outcry wild
As welcomed to life the ocean-child !

I've lived since then, in calm and strife,
Full fifty summers a sailor's life ;
With wealth to spend and a power to range,
And never have sought nor sighed for change ;
And Death, whenever he comes to me,
Shall come on the wide, unbounded sea.

A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM

A WET sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast,
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast ;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While, like the eagle free,
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

" O for a soft and gentle wind ! "
I heard a fair one cry ;
But give to me the snoring breeze,
And white waves heaving high ;
And white waves heaving high, my boys,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornèd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud,
And hark the music, mariners,
The wind is piping loud ;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashing free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

The Sea Gipsy

RICHARD HOVEY

I AM fevered with the sunset
I am fretful with the bay,
For the wander-thirst is on me,
And my soul is in Cathay.

There's a schooner in the offing,
With her topsails shot with fire,
And my heart is gone aboard her
For the Islands of Desire.

I must forth again to-morrow!
With the sunset I must be
Hull down on the trail of rapture
In the wonder of the sea.

Echo

WILLIAM ROWLEY

ART thou gone in haste?
I'll not forsake thee;
Run'st thou ne'er so fast,
I'll overtake thee:
O'er the dales, o'er the downs,
Through the green meadows,
From the fields through the towns,

To the dim shadows.
All along the plain,
To the low fountains,
Up and down again
From the high mountains.
Echo then shall again
Tell her I follow,
And the floods to the woods
Carry my hollo !
Hollo !

When Icicles Hang by the Wall

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipt, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-who ;
Tu-whit, tu-who—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,

When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-who ;
Tu-whit, tu-who—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

Song of the Elves

ANONYMOUS

By wells and rills, in meadows green,
We nightly dance our heyday guise ;
And to our fairy King and Queen
We chant our moonlight minstrelsies.
When laverocks sing
Away we fling
Through wood, through lake,
Through bog, through brake,
And frolic it with " Ho ! ho ! ho ! "

Saint George of England *

ANONYMOUS

Saint George he was a fighting man, as all the tales do tell ;
He fought a battle long ago, and fought it wondrous well ;
With his helmet and his hauberk and his good cross-hilted sword,

* *This poem was written during the great European War.*

Oh, he rode a-slaying dragons to the glory of the Lord,
And when his time on earth was done he found he could not rest
Where the year is always summer in the Islands of the Blest,
So back he came to earth again to see what he could do,
And they cradled him in England,
In England, April England—
Oh, they cradled him in England where the golden willows blow.

Saint George he was a fighting man, and loved a fighting breed,
And wherever England wants him now he's ready to her need ;
From Crecy field to Neuve Chapelle he's there with hand and sword,
And he sailed with Drake from Devon to the glory of the Lord.
His arm is strong to fight the wrong and break the tyrant's pride ;
He was there when Nelson triumphed ; he was there when Gordon died ;
He sees his Red Cross ensign float on all the winds that blow,
And, oh ! his heart's in England,
In England, April England—
His heart it dreams of England, where the golden willows blow.

Saint George he was a fighting man, he's here and fighting still,
While any wrong is yet to right or dragon yet to kill ;
And, faith ! he's finding work this day to suit his war-worn sword,
For he's strafing Huns in Flanders yet to the glory of the Lord !
Saint George he is a fighting man, but, when the fighting's past,
And dead amidst the trampled fields the fiercest and the last
Of all the dragons earth has known beneath his feet lies low,
Ah, his heart will turn to England,
To England, April England—
He'll come back to rest in England where the golden willows blow.

The Last Poem

SIR CECIL SPRING RICE

I vow to thee, my country—all earthly things above—
Entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love,
The love that asks no questions ; the love that stands the test,
That lays upon the altar the dearest and the best ;
The love that never falters, the love that pays the price,
The love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.

And there's another country I've heard of long ago—
Most dear to them that love her, most great to them that know;
We may not count her armies; we may not see her King;
Her fortress is a faithful heart; her pride is suffering;
And soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase;
And her ways are ways of gentleness, and all her paths are peace.

Evensong

CHARLES I.

Close thine eyes and sleep secure;
Thy soul is safe, thy body sure;
He that guards thee, he that keeps,
Never slumbers, never sleeps.
A quiet conscience in the breast
Has only peace, has only rest.
The wisest, and the mirth of kings,
Are out of tune unless she sings.

Then close thine eyes in peace and sleep secure,
No sleep so sweet as thine, no rest so sure.

The Burial of Moses

C. F. ALEXANDER

By Nebo's lonely mountain,
On this side of Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab
There lies a lonely grave.
And no man knows that sepulchre,
And no man saw it e'er,
For the angels of God upturned the sod
And laid the dead man there.

That was the grandest funeral
That ever passed on earth ;
But no man heard the trampling,
Or saw the train go forth—
Noiselessly as the daylight
Comes back when night is done,
And the crimson streak on ocean's cheek
Grows into the great sun ;

Noiselessly as the springtime
Her crown of verdure weaves,
And all the trees on all the hills
Open their thousand leaves ;
So without sound of music,
Or voice of them that wept,

Silently down from the mountain's crown
The great procession swept.

Perchance the bold old eagle
On grey Beth-Peor's height,
Out of his lonely eyrie
Looked on the wondrous sight;
Perchance the lion stalking
Still shuns that hallowed spot,
For beast and bird have seen and heard
That which man knoweth not.

But when the warrior dieth,
His comrades in the war,
With arms reversed and muffled drum,
Follow his funeral car;
They show the banners taken,
They tell his battles won,
And after him lead his masterless steed,
While peals the minute gun.

Amid the noblest of the land
We lay the sage to rest,
And give the bard an honoured place,
With costly marble dressed,
In the great minster transept,
Where lights like glories fall,
And the organ rings, and the sweet choir sings,
Along the emblazoned wall.

This was the truest warrior
That ever buckled sword ;
This the most gifted poet
That ever breathed a word ;
And never earth's philosopher
Traced with his golden pen
On the deathless page truths half so sage
As he wrote down for men.

And had he not high honour—
The hill-side for a pall,
To lie in state while angels wait
With stars for tapers tall ;
And the dark rock-pines, like tossing plumes,
Over his bier to wave ;
And God's own hand in that lonely land
To lay him in the grave ?

In that strange grave without a name,
Whence his uncoffined clay
Shall break again, O wondrous thought !
Before the Judgment Day,
And stand with glory wrapt around
On the hills he never trod,
And speak of the strife that won our life
With the Incarnate Son of God.

O lonely grave in Moab's land !
O dark Beth-Peor's hill !

Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
And teach them to be still.
God hath His mysteries of grace,
Ways that we cannot tell;
He hides them deep, like the hidden sleep
Of him he loved so well.

The Twenty Third Psalm

JOSEPH ADDISON

The Lord my pasture shall prepare,
And feed me with a shepherd's care:
His presence shall my wants supply,
And guard me with a watchful eye;
My noonday walks He shall attend,
And all my midnight hours defend.

When in the sultry glebe I faint,
Or on the thirsty mountain pant,
To fertile vales and dewy meads
My weary wandering steps he leads;
Where peaceful rivers, soft and slow,
Amid the verdant landscape flow.

Tho' in the paths of death I tread,
With gloomy horrors overspread,
My steadfast heart shall fear no ill,
For thou, O Lord, art with me still;
Thy friendly crook shall give me aid,
And guide me through the dreadful shade.

Though in a bare and rugged way,
Thro' devious lonely wilds I stray,
Thy bounty shall my pains beguile :
The barren wilderness shall smile,
With sudden greens and herbage crowned,
And streams shall murmur all around.

I Sing of a Maiden

ANONYMOUS

I sing of a maiden
  That is matchless,
King of all Kings
  For her son she chose.

He came all so still
  Where his mother was,
As dew in April
  That falls on the grass.

He came all so still
  To his mother's bower,
As dew in April
  That falls on the flower.

He came all so still
  Where his mother lay,
As dew in April
  That falls on the spray.

Mother and maiden
  Was never none but she ;
Well may such a lady
  God's mother be.

In a Cottage in Fife

ANONYMOUS

In a cottage in Fife
  Lived a man and his wife,
Who, believe me, were comical folk ;
  For, to people's surprise,
  They both saw with their eyes,
And their tongues moved whenever they spoke.

When they were asleep,
  I'm told that to keep
Their eyes open they could not contrive ;
  They both walked on their feet,
  And 'twas thought what they ate
Helped, with drinking, to keep them alive.

The Twins

H. S. LEIGH

In form and feature, face and limb,
  I grew so like my brother,
That folks got taking me for him,
  And each for one another.

It puzzled all our kith and kin,
  It reached a fearful pitch,
For one of us was born a twin,
  Yet not a soul knew which.

One day, to make the matter worse,
  Before our names were fixed,
As we were being washed by nurse,
  We got completely mixed ;
And thus you see, by Fate's decree,
  Or rather nurse's whim,
My brother John got christened me,
  And I got christened him.

This fatal likeness even dogged
  My footsteps when at school,
And I was always getting flogged,
  For John turned out a fool.
I put this question fruitlessly
  To everyone I knew,
" What would you do if you were me,
  To prove that you were you ? "

Our close resemblance turned the tide
  Of my domestic life,
For somehow my intended bride
  Became my brother's wife.
In fact, year after year, the same
  Absurd mistakes went on ;
And when I died, the neighbours came
  And buried brother John.

The Plaint of the Camel

CHARLES EDWARD CARYLL

Canary birds feed on sugar and seed,
Parrots have crackers to crunch ;
And as for the poodles, they tell me the noodles
Have chicken and cream for their lunch.
But there's never a question
About my digestion—
Anything does for me.

Cats, you're aware, can repose in a chair ;
Chickens can roost upon rails ;
Puppies are able to sleep in a stable ;
And oysters can slumber in pails.
But no one supposes
A poor camel dozes—
Any place does for me.

Lambs are enclosed where it's never exposed ;
Coops are constructed for hens ;
Kittens are treated to houses well heated ;
And pigs are protected by pens.
But a camel comes handy
Wherever it's sandy—
Anywhere does for me.

People would laugh if you rode a giraffe,
Or mounted the back of an ox ;

It's nobody's habit to ride on a rabbit,
  Or try to bestraddle a fox.
But as for a camel, he's
Ridden by families—
Any load does for me.

A snake is as round as a hole in the ground ;
  Weasles are wavy and sleek ;
And no alligator could ever be straighter
  Than lizards that live in a creek.
But a camel's all lumpy,
And bumpy and humpy—
Any shape does for me.

The Reverie of Poor Susan

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,
There's a thrush that sings loud—it has sung for three years :
Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of the bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment ; what ails her ! She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees ;
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail,
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven : but they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade :
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
And the colours have all passed away from her eyes.

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vale and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils !
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle in the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay ;
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee ;

A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company ;
I gazed, and gazed, but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude ;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

The Summer Sun Shone Round Me

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

The summer sun shone round me,
The folded valley lay
In a stream of sun and odour,
That sultry summer day.

The tall trees stood in the sunlight
As still as still could be,
But the deep grass sighed and rustled
And bowed and beckoned me.

The deep grass moved and whispered
And bowed and brushed my face.
It whispered in the sunshine :
" The winter comes apace."

I Will Make You Brooches

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

I WILL make you brooches and toys for your delight,
Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night.
I will make a palace fit for you and me
Of green days in forests and blue days at sea.

I will make my kitchen, and you shall keep your room,
Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom,
And you shall wash your linen and keep your body white
In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.

And this shall be for music when no one else is near,
The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear,
That only I remember, that only you admire,
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire.

Scythe Song

ANDREW LANG

MOWERS, weary and brown and blithe,
  What is the word methinks ye know—
Endless over-word that the scythe
  Sings to the blades of the grass below ?
Scythes that swing in the grass and clover,
  Something, still, they say as they pass ;
What is the word that, over and over,
  Sings the scythe to the flowers and grass ?

Hush, ah, hush, the scythes are saying,
Hush and heed not, and fall asleep ;
Hush, they say to the grasses swaying,
Hush, they sing to the clover deep !
Hush—'tis the lullaby Time is singing—
Hush, and heed not, for all things pass,
Hush, ah, hush ! and the scythes are swinging
Over the clover, over the grass.

The Blackbird

NORA CHESSON

The blackbird has a mouth of gold, though sombre be his feathers,
The lark is for the summer noon, the blackbird for all weathers ;
The lark he sets his heart above all things that are on earth,
But the blackbird in the cherry-tree finds rest and food and mirth.

The blackbird is a bonny bird despite his mourning colour,
He sings but all the merrier when earth and skies grow duller.
He whistles and he sings the while he swings from tree to tree,
For a rare mate and a fair mate in the cherry-boughs has he.

Of all the trees in the orchard the cherry-tree's the best,
For deep amid its branches, like a blithe heart in its breast,
There lilts a hidden blackbird, and he's singing to his dear,
And who would grudge their cherries so sweet a song to hear ?

Oh, who would grudge their whitehearts to pay for such a song ?
God love the merry blackbird who lifts the year along :
God shield the blackbird's nestlings and the blackbird's brooding wife,
And fill up with sweets full measure the days of the blackbird's life.

The Crow

WILLIAM CANTON

With rakish eye and plenished crop,
  Oblivious of the farmer's gun,
Upon the naked ash-tree top
  The crow sits basking in the sun.

An old ungodly rogue, I wot !
  For, perched in black against the blue,
His feathers, torn with beak and shot,
  Let woeful glints of April through.

The year's new grass, and, golden-eyed,
  The daisies sparkle underneath,
And chestnut trees on either side
  Have opened every ruddy sheath.

But doubtful still of frost and snow,
  The ash alone stands stark and bare,
And on its topmost twig the crow
  Takes the glad morning's sun and air.

The Little Red Lark

KATHARINE TYNAN

THE little red lark is shaking his wings,
Straight from the breast of his love he springs ;
Listen the lilt of the song he sings,
All in the morning early, O.

The sea is rocking a cradle, hark !
To a hushing-song, and the fields are dark,
And would I were there with the little red lark,
All in the morning early, O.

The beard of barley is old man's gray,
All green and silver the new-mown hay.
The dew from his wings he has shaken away,
All in the morning early, O.

The little red lark is high in the sky ;
No eagle soars where the lark may fly.
Where are you going to, high, so high ?
All in the morning early, O.

His wings and his feathers are sunrise red ;
He hails the sun and his golden head ;
" Good morrow, sun, you are long a-bed,"
All in the morning early, O.

I would I were where the little red lark,
Up in the dawn like a rose-red spark,
Sheds the day on the fields so dark,
All in the morning early, O.

The Windmill

ROBERT BRIDGES

THE green corn waving in the dale,
The ripe grass waving on the hill :
I lean across the paddock pale,
And gaze upon the giddy mill.

Its hurtling sails a mighty sweep
Cut thro' the air : with rushing sound
Each strikes in fury down the steep,
Rattles, and whirls in chase around.

Beside his sacks the miller stands
On high within the open door :
A book and pencil in his hands,
His grist and meal he reckoneth o'er.

His tireless merry slave the wind
Is busy with his work to-day :
From whencesoe'er, he comes to grind ;
He hath a will and knows the way.

He gives the creaking sails a spin,
The circling millstones faster flee,
The shuddering timbers groan within,
And down the shoot the meal runs free.

The miller giveth him no thanks,
And doth not much his work o'erlook :
He stands beside the sacks, and ranks
The figures in his dusty book.

Nicholas Nye

WALTER DE LA MARE

Thistle and darnel and dock grew there,
And a bush, in the corner, of may ;
On the orchard wall I used to sprawl
In the blazing heat of the day,
Half asleep and half awake,
While the birds went twittering by,
And nobody there my lone to share
But Nicholas Nye.

Nicholas Nye was lean and grey,
Lame of a leg and old,
More than a score of donkey's years
He had seen since he was foaled ;
He munched the thistles, purple and spiked,
Would sometimes stoop and sigh,
And turn to his head, as if he said,
" Poor Nicholas Nye ! "

Alone with his shadow he'd drowse in the meadow,
Lazily swinging his tail,
At break of day he used to bray—
Not much too hearty and hale ;
But a wonderful gumption was under his skin,
And a clear calm light in his eye,
And, once in a while, he would smile a smile—
Would Nicholas Nye.

Seem to be smiling at me, he would,
From his bush, in the corner, of may—
Bony and ownerless, widowed and worn,
Knobble-kneed, lonely and grey ;
And over the grass would seem to pass
'Neath the deep dark blue of the sky,
Something much better than words between me
And Nicholas Nye.

But dusk would come in the apple boughs,
The green of the glow-worm shine,
The birds in nest would crouch to rest,
And home I'd trudge to mine ;
And there in the moonlight, dark with dew,
Asking not wherefore nor why,
Would brood like a ghost, and as still as a post,
Old Nicholas Nye.

The Scarecrow

WALTER DE LA MARE

All winter through I bow my head
Beneath the driving rain ;
The North Wind powders me with snow,
And blows me black again ;
At midnight under a maze of stars
I flame with glittering rime,
And stand, above the stubble, stiff
As mail at morning-prime.

But when that child called Spring, and all
His host of children, come,
Scattering their buds and dew upon
These acres of my home,
Some rapture in my rags awakes ;
I lift void eyes and scan
The skies for crows, those ravening foes
Of my strange master, Man.

I watch him striding lank behind
His clashing team, and know
Soon will the wheat swish body high
Where once lay sterile snow ;
Soon shall I gaze across a sea
Of sun-begotten grain,
Which my unflinching watch hath sealed
For harvest once again.

The Fighting Téméraire

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

It was eight bells ringing,
For the morning watch was done,
And the gunner's lads were singing,
As they polished every gun.
It was eight bells ringing,
And the gunner's lads were singing,
For the ship she rode a-swinging,
As they polished every gun.

Oh! to see the linstock lighting,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
Oh! to hear the round-shot biting,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
Oh! to see the linstock lighting,
And to hear the round-shot biting,
For we're all in love with fighting
On the Fighting Téméraire.

It was noontide ringing,
And the battle just begun,
When the ship her way was winging,
As they loaded every gun.
It was noontide ringing
When the ship her way was winging,
And the gunner's lads were singing
As they loaded every gun.

There'll be many grim and gory,
Téméraire ! Téméraire !
There'll be few to tell the story,
Téméraire ! Téméraire !
There'll be many grim and gory,
There'll be few to tell the story,
But we'll all be one in glory,
With the Fighting Téméraire.

There's a far bell ringing
At the setting of the sun,
And a phantom voice is singing
Of the great days done.
There's a far bell ringing,
And a phantom voice is singing
Of renown for ever clinging
To the great days done.

Now the sunset breezes shiver,
Téméraire ! Téméraire !
And she's fading down the river,
Téméraire ! Téméraire !
Now the sunset breezes shiver,
And she's fading down the river,
But in England's song for ever
She's the Fighting Téméraire.

MEADOW VIEW
LENZIE

Admirals All

A Song of Sea Kings

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

Effingham, Grenville, Raleigh, Drake,
Here's to the bold and free!
Benbow, Collingwood, Byron, Blake,
Hail to the Kings of the Sea!
Admirals all, for England's sake,
Honour be yours and fame!
And honour as long as waves shall break,
To Nelson's peerless name!

Admirals all, for England's sake,
Honour be yours and fame!
And honour, as long as waves shall break,
To Nelson's peerless name!

Essex was fretting in Cadiz Bay
With the galleons fair in sight;
Howard at last must give him his way,
And the word was passed to fight.
Never was schoolboy gayer than he
Since holidays first began;
He tossed his bonnet to wind and sea,
And under the guns he ran.

Drake nor devil nor Spaniard feared,
Their cities he put to the sack;
He singed his Catholic Majesty's beard,
And harried his ships to wrack.

He was playing at Plymouth a rubber of bowls
When the great Armada came ;
But he said, " They must wait their turn, good souls ; "
And he stooped and finished the game.

Fifteen sail were the Dutchmen bold,
Duncan he had but two,
But he anchored them fast where the Texel shoaled,
And his colours aloft he flew.
" I've taken the depth to a fathom," he cried,
" And I'll sink with a right good will ;
For I know when we're all of us under the tide
My flag will be fluttering still."

Splinters were flying above, below,
When Nelson sailed the Sound :
" Mark you, I wouldn't be elsewhere now,"
Said he, " for a thousand pound ! "
The Admiral's signal bade him fly,
But he wickedly wagged his head ;
He clapped the glass to his sightless eye,
And " I'm hanged if I see it," he said.

Admirals all, they said their say
(The echoes are ringing still) ;
Admirals all, they went their way
To the haven under the hill.

But they left, as a kingdom none can take,
The realm of the circling sea,
To be ruled by the rightful sons of Blake,
And the Rodneys yet to be.

Admirals all, for England's sake,
Honour be yours and fame!
And honour, as long as waves shall break,
To Nelson's peerless name!

Ye Mariners of England

THOMAS CAMPBELL

Ye mariners of England
That guard our native seas,
Whose flag has braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze!
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe!
And sweep through the deep
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of our fathers
Shall start from every wave!
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And ocean was their grave.

Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep
While the stormy winds do blow ;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep ;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below,
As they roar on the shore
When the stormy winds do blow ;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn,
Till danger's troubled night depart
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean warriors,
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow ;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow !

Coronach

SIR WALTER SCOTT

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The fount reappearing
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow.

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the corry,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever!

Seagulls

NORAH HOLLAND

WHERE the dark green hollows lift
  Into crests of snow,
Wheeling, flashing, floating by,
White against the stormy sky,
With exultant call and cry,
  Swift the seagulls go.

Fearless vagabonds, and free,
  Children of the spray,
Spirits of old mariners
Drifting down the restless years—
Drake's and Hawkins' buccaneers,
  So do seamen say.

Watching, guarding, sailing still
  Round the shores they knew,
Where the cliffs of Devon rise
Red against the sullen skies
(Dearer far than Paradise),
  'Mid the tossing blue.

Not for them the heavenly song;
  Sweeter still they find
Than those angels, row on row,
Thunder of the bursting snow
Seething on the rocks below,
  Singing of the wind.

Fairer than the streets of gold
  Those wild fields of foam,
Where the horses of the sea
Stamp and whinny ceaselessly,
Warding from all enemy
  Shores they once called home.

So the seagulls call and cry
  'Neath the cliffs to-day,
Spirits of old mariners
Drifting down the restless years—
Drake's and Hawkins' buccaneers,
  So do seamen say.

Greenaway

SIR RENNELL RODD

THE mother looked out from the window-bay, looked over the woods to the sea,
And " Where are these four bonny boys of mine ? " and " Where are they gone ? " said she.

The gardener's lad with the wave-tanned face looked up from the blush-rose bed,
" They have taken the boat and dropped on the ebb at dawn of the day," he said.

The mother turned from the window-bay ; she was fair as a three-months' bride.
" Ah, well-a-day for my four wild boys and their lust of the sea," she sighed.

But deeper yet had the mother sighed could she know
what the years would bring,
The gift of the sea, and the doom of the sea, and the
faith of a craven king.

A stone's throw under the windows, by dale and covert
and down,
The Dart winds home from its moorland source to the
roads and the haven town ;

And thither it was in an old sea-boat from their home at
Greenaway
The eager sons of the manor-house would fare for their
holiday.

There were Humphry and Adrien Gilbert, with their
friend from over the moor,
The yeoman's son John Davies, to lug at the heavy
oar.

And the boy that held the tiller, the fourth and the
youngest one,
Was the heir of Walter Raleigh, and the same fair
mother's son.

What deeds of wild adventure they have dared on that
Devon stream,
When the fabled West was an easy quest to a boy's
light-hearted dream ;

When the river-reach was their tropic sea, and the coast
was the Spanish main,
And the blistered wreck on the ebb-tide shoal was a
great galleass of Spain.

And so they would come to the haven, where, moored to
the laden quays,
Were the ships at rest with their canvas furled from a
hundred marvellous seas ;

The lofty poops and the painted hulls of the beautiful
ships of old,
The carven prows and the open ports with their guns
that shone like gold ;

For the boys that were born and cradled where the
breeze of the ocean blows,
They loved those ships with a passion that only the sea
child knows.

And the Channel rovers knew them, the men of the
western shire,
And told them tales of the ocean life and the world of
a boy's desire ;

There was one that had sailed with Strangeways,
another with red Tremayne ;
They could tell of the Holy Office and the rule of the
monk in Spain ;

Of the corsair folk in the Eastern isles with the long
brass guns on deck,
Of the North Sea spray, of a gale in the bay, of a fight,
of a run, of a wreck ;

Of the fur-clad folk and the frost-bound shores, where
the day and night are one,
And the drifting ice-floes sparkle to the gleam of the
midnight sun ;

But the tale that held them longest was the tale of the
isles that lie
Far over the great Atlantic and the land of the sunset
sky ;

Where veiled in rumour and fable, withdrawn as a
virgin bride,
The world to be wooed and conquered was a quest that
was still untried.

Then the lips would part and the eager eyes go westward
over the sea,
" A little while, but a little while, and the time will
come for me."

Now tack—for the tide sets inland, and the mother frets
in the hall,
" We have far to go ere the sun be low—good hap to ye,
masters all ! "

"God speed to ye, gentle worships—good hap to ye, honest John,
Good luck to ye, young Squire Raleigh, and keep your eye on the Don!"

The mother looked out as the westering sun went under the steep moorside,
And "Where are those four bonny boys of mine? They are long from their home," she sighed.

But deeper yet had the mother sighed, could she know what the end would be,
The golden dream of the after years, and the doom that came from the sea.

The Armada

LORD MACAULAY

Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise;
I tell of the thrice-famous deeds she wrought in ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.
It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant ship full sail to Plymouth Bay;
Her crew had seen Castile's black fleet, beyond Aurigny's Isle,

At earliest twilight, on the waves lie floating many a mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial grace :
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close in chase.
Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the wall ;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty hall :
Many a light fishing bark put out to pry along the coast ;
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post.
With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff comes ;
Behind him march the halberdiers ; before him sound the drums.
His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample space ;
For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her Grace.
And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance the bells,
As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon swells ;
Look how the Lion of the Sea lifts up his ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies down !

So stalked he when he turned to flight on that famed
Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Cæsar's eagle
shield ;
So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to bay,
And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely
hunters lay.
Ho ! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight ; ho ! scatter
flowers, fair maids ;
Ho ! gunners, fire a loud salute ; ho ! gallants, draw
your blades :
Thou sun, shine on her joyously ; ye breezes, waft her
wide ;
Our glorious SEMPER EADEM, the banner of our pride.
The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's
massy fold :
The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty
scroll of gold :
Night sank upon the dusky beach and on the purple sea,
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again
shall be.
From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to
Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day ;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-flame
spread,
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone ; it shone on
Beachy Head.

Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling points of fire.
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering waves,
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's sunless caves ;
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the fiery herald flew ;
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers of Beaulieu.
Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out from Bristol town,
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on Clifton down ;
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of blood-red light.
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the deathlike silence broke,
And with one start and with one cry the royal city woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answering fires ;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling spires ;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the voice of fear ;

And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a louder cheer ;
And from the farthest wards was heard the rush of hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down each roaring street ;
And broader still became the blaze and louder still the din,
As fast from every village round the horse came spurring in ;
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the warlike errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires of Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those bright couriers forth ;
High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started for the north ;
And on, and on, without a pause, untired they bounded still ;
All night from tower to tower they sprang ; they sprang from hill to hill ;
Till the proud Peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwen's rocky dales,
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills of Wales,
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's lonely height,

Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest of light,
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's stately fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the boundless plain ;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of Trent ;
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle.

The Loss of the "Royal George"

WILLIAM COWPER

Toll for the brave,
The brave that are no more !
All sunk beneath the wave
Fast by their native shore !

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
And laid her on her side.

A land breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset ;

Down went the *Royal George*,
With all her crew complete!

Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone
His last sea-fight is fought,
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up
Once dreaded by our foes!
And mingle with the cup
The tear that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again,
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the waves no more.

The Charge of the Light Brigade

ALFRED TENNYSON

I

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
  Rode the six hundred.
" Forward, the Light Brigade,
Charge for the guns ! " he said ;
Into the valley of Death
  Rode the six hundred.

II

" Forward, the Light Brigade."
Was there a man dismayed ?
Not tho' the soldier knew
  Some one had blundered.
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die ;
Into the valley of Death
  Rode the six hundred.

III

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
  Volley'd and thunder'd ;

Stormed at with shot and shell
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

IV

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd ;
Plunged in the battery smoke,
Right thro' the line they broke !
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shattered and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

V

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them,
Volley'd and thunder'd.
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well

Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

VI

When can their glory fade ?
O the wild charge they made !
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made !
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred !

The Battle of Hohenlinden

THOMAS CAMPBELL

On Linden when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed,
Each warrior drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neighed,
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
Then rushed the steed to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of Heaven,
Far flashed the red artillery.

And redder yet those fires shall glow
On Linden's hills of stainéd snow
And bloodier yet shall be the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn! but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few shall part where many meet,
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

The Destruction of Sennacherib

LORD BYRON

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold,
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host, with their banners, at sunset were seen ;
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed,
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still.

And there lay the steed with his nostrils all wide,
But through them there rolled not the breath of his pride ;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail ;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal ;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.

Lochinvar

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Oh young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best,
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Esk river where ford there was none ;
But ere he alighted at Netherby gate
The bride had consented, the gallant came late ;
For a laggard in love and a dastard in war
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
'Mong bridesmen, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all.
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word),
" Oh come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar ? "

" I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied ;
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide ;
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet ; the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand ere her mother could bar,
" Now tread we a measure ! " said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace ;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume ;
And the bridemaidens whispered, " 'Twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near,
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung.
" She is won ! we are gone ! over bank, bush, and scaur,
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby clan,
Foresters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran ;
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar ?

How They brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix

ROBERT BROWNING

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he ;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three ;
"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the gate-bolts undrew;
" Speed ! " echoed the wall to us galloping through ;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other ; we kept the great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place ;
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting ; but while we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear ;
At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see ;
At Düffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could be ;
And from Mecheln church-steeple, we heard the half-chime;
So Joris broke silence with, " Yet there is time ! "

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,
To stare thro' the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last

With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray.

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track ;
And one eye's black intelligence—ever that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance !
And the thick, heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned ; and cried Joris, " Stay spur !
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her ;
We'll remember at Aix "—for one heard the quick wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck, and staggering knees,
And sunk tail, the horrible heave of her flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky ;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff ;
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And " Gallop ! " cried Joris, " for Aix is in sight."

" How they'll greet us ! "—and all in a moment his roan
Rolled neck and crop over, lay dead as a stone ;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buff-coat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer;
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise bad or good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is friends flocking round
As I sate with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground,
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent.

Mary Ambree

ANONYMOUS

When captains courageous, whom death could not daunt,
Did march to the siege of the city of Gaunt,
They mustered their soldiers by two and by three,
And the foremost in battle was Mary Ambree.

When the brave sergeant-major was slain in her sight,
Who was her true lover, her joy and delight,
Because he was slain most treacherously,
Then vowed to revenge him Mary Ambree.

She clothéd herself from the top to the toe
In buff of the bravest, most seemly to show ;
A fair shirt of mail then slippéd on she :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

A helmet of proof she straight did provide,
A strong arming sword she girt by her side ;
On her hand a goodly fair gauntlet put she :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

Then took she her sword and her target in hand,
Bidding all such as would to be of her band ;
To wait on her person came thousand and three :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

" My soldiers," she saith, " so valiant and bold,
Now follow your captain, whom you do behold ;
Still foremost in battle myself will I be ; "
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

Then cried out her soldiers, and loud did they say,
" So well thou becomest this gallant array,
Thy heart and thy weapon so well do agree,
No maiden was ever like Mary Ambree."

She cheeréd her soldiers, that foughten for life,
With ancient and standard, with drum and with fife,
With brave clanging trumpets that sounded so free ;
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

" Before I will see the worst of you all
To come into danger of death or of thrall,
This hand and this life I will venture so free : "
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

She led up her soldiers in battle array,
'Gainst three times their number by break of the day ;
Seven hours in skirmish continuéd she :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

She filléd the skies with the smoke of her shot,
And her enemies' bodies with bullets so hot ;
For one of her own men a score killéd she :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

And when her false gunner, to spoil her intent,
Away all her pellets and powder had sent,
Straight with her keen weapon she slasht him in three :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

Being falsely betrayéd for lucre of hire,
At length she was forced to make a retire ;
Then her soldiers into a strong castle drew she :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

Her foes they beset her on every side,
As thinking close siege she could never abide ;
To beat down the walls they all did decree :
But stoutly defied them brave Mary Ambree.

Then took she her sword and her target in hand,
And mounting the walls all undaunted did stand,
There daring their captains to match any three :
O what a brave captain was Mary Ambree !

" Now say, English captain, what wouldst thou give
To ransom thyself, which else must not live ?
Come, yield thyself quickly, or slain thou must be : "
Then smilèd sweetly brave Mary Ambree.

" Ye captains courageous, of valour so bold,
Whom think you before you now you do behold ? "
" A knight, sir, of England, and captain so free,
Who shortly with us a prisoner must be."

" No captain of England : behold in your sight
The locks of a woman, and therefore no knight ;
No knight, sir, of England, nor captain you see,
But a poor simple maiden called Mary Ambree."

" But art thou a woman, as thou dost declare,
Whose valour hath proved so undaunted in war ?
If England doth yield such brave maidens as thee,
Full well may they conquer, fair Mary Ambree."

Then to her own country she back did return,
Still holding the foes of fair England in scorn ;
Therefóre English captains of every degree
Sing forth the brave valours of Mary Ambree.

The Night

JAMES STEPHENS

THE night was creeping on the ground ;
She crept and did not make a sound
Until she reached the tree, and then
She covered it, and stole again
Along the grass beside the wall.
I heard the rustle of her shawl
As she threw blackness everywhere
Upon the sky and ground and air,
And in the room where I was hid :
But no matter what she did
To everything that was without,
She could not put my candle out,
So I stared at the night, and she
Stared back solemnly at me.

Silver

WALTER DE LA MARE

SLOWLY, silently, now the moon
Walks the night in her silver shoon ;
This way, and that, she peers, and sees
Silver fruit upon silver trees ;
One by one the casements catch
Her beams beneath the silvery thatch ;
Couched in his kennel, like a log,
With paws of silver sleeps the dog ;

From their shadowy cote the white breasts peep
Of doves in a silver-feathered sleep ;
A harvest mouse goes scampering by,
With silver claws and silver eye ;
And moveless fish in the water gleam,
By silver reeds in a silver stream.

Green Broom

ANONYMOUS

THERE was an old man lived out in the wood ;
His trade was cutting of Broom, green Broom ;
He had but one son without thrift, without good,
Who lay in his bed till 'twas noon, bright noon.

The old man awoke one morning and spoke ;
He swore he would fire the room, that room,
If his John would not rise and open his eyes,
And away to the wood to cut Broom, green Broom.

So Johnny arose, and he slipped on his clothes,
And away to the wood to cut Broom, green Broom ;
He sharpened his knives, and for once he contrives
To cut a great bundle of Broom, green Broom.

When Johnny passed under a lady's fine house,
Passed under a lady's fine room, fine room,
She said to her maid, " Go, fetch me," she said,
" Go, fetch me the boy that sells Broom, green Broom."

When Johnny came in to the lady's fine house,
And stood in the lady's fine room, fine room,
"Young Johnny," she said, "will you give up your trade,
And marry a lady in bloom, full bloom?"

Johnny gave his consent, and to church they both went,
And he wedded the lady in bloom, full bloom;
At market and fair, all folks do declare,
There is none like the boy that sold Broom, green Broom.

A Wish

SAMUEL ROGERS

Mine be a cot beside the hill;
A beehive's hum shall soothe my ear;
A willowy brook that turns a mill,
With many a fall, shall linger near.

The swallow oft beneath my thatch
Shall twitter near her clay-built nest;
Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
And share my meal, a welcome guest.

Around my ivied porch shall spring
Each fragrant flower that drinks the dew;
And Lucy, at her wheel, shall sing,
In russet gown, and apron blue.

The village church among the trees,
  Where first our marriage-vows were given,
With merry peals shall swell the breeze,
  And point with taper spire to heaven.

The Village Blacksmith

H. W. LONGFELLOW

Under a spreading chestnut-tree
  The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
  With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
  Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
  His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
  He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
  For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
  You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
  With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
  When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door ;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks, that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys ;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise !
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies ;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling—rejoicing—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes ;
Each morning sees some task begun,
Each evening sees it close ;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught !

Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

The Slave's Dream

H. W. LONGFELLOW

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his native land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain-road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand—
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids,
And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank ;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
The bright flamingoes flew ;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyena scream ;
And the river-horse as he crushed the reeds
Beside some hidden stream ;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
Shouted of liberty ;
And the blast of the desert cried aloud,
With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep, and smiled
At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
Nor the burning heat of day ;
For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,

And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away !

Nod

WALTER DE LA MARE

Softly along the road of evening,
In a twilight dim with rose,
Wrinkled with age, and drenched with dew,
Old Nod, the shepherd, goes.

His drowsy flock streams on before him,
Their fleeces charged with gold,
To where the sun's last beam leans low
On Nod the shepherd's fold.

The hedge is quick and green with briar,
From their sand the conies creep ;
And all the birds that fly in heaven
Flock singing home to sleep.

His lambs outnumber a noon's roses,
Yet, when night's shadows fall,
His blind old sheep-dog, Slumber-soon,
Misses not one of all.

His are the quiet steeps of dreamland,
The waters of no-more-pain,
His ram's bell rings 'neath an arch of stars,
" Rest, rest, and rest again."

The Outlaw

SIR WALTER SCOTT

O Brignall banks are wild and fair,
  And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
  Would grace a summer-queen.
And as I rode by Dalton Hall
  Beneath the turrets high,
A maiden on the castle-wall
  Was singing merrily :
" O Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
  And Greta woods are green ;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
  Than reign our English queen."

" If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
  To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we
  That dwell by dale and down.
And if thou canst that riddle read,
  As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed
  As blithe as Queen of May."
Yet sung she, " Brignall banks are fair,
  And Greta woods are green ;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
  Than reign our English queen.

" I read you, by your bugle-horn
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn
To keep the king's greenwood."
" A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light ;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night."
Yet sung she, " Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay ;
I would I were with Edmund there
To reign his Queen of May !

" With burnish'd brand and musketoon
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold Dragoon
That lists the tuck of drum."
" I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear ;
But when the beetle sounds his hum
My comrades take the spear.
And O ! though Brignall banks be fair
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare
Would reign my Queen of May !

" Maiden ! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die ;
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I !

And when I'm with my comrades met
  Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
  Nor think what we are now."
Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
  And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
  Would grace a summer queen.

Alice Brand

SIR WALTER SCOTT

I

Merry it is in the good greenwood,
  Where the mavis and merle are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
  And the hunter's horn is ringing.

" O Alice Brand, my native land
  Is lost for love of you ;
And we must hold by wood and wold
  As outlaws wont to do.

" O Alice, 'twas all for thy locks so bright,
  And 'twas all for thine eyes so blue,
That on the night of our luckless flight
  Thy brother bold I slew.

Now must I teach to hew the beech
The hand that held the glaive,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed
And stakes to fence our cave.

" And for vest of pall, thy fingers small
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughtered deer,
To keep the cold away."

" O Richard, if my brother died,
'Twas but a fatal chance,
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

" If pall and vair no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet grey,
As gay the forest green.

" And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richàrd,
And he his Alice Brand ! "

II

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
So blithe Lady Alice is singing ;
On the beech's pride, and the oak's brown side,
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who wonned within the hill—
Like wind in the porch of a ruined church,
His voice was ghostly shrill.

"Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moonlight circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies' fatal green?

"Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christened man;
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For muttered word or ban.

"Lay on him the curse of the withered heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die.

III

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
Though the birds have stilled their singing;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is faggots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands,

And as he crossed and blessed himself,
" I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,
" That is made with bloody hands."

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear,
" And if there's blood upon his hands,
'Tis but the blood of deer."

" Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood !
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand."

Then forward stepped she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign,—
" And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine.

" And I conjure thee, demon elf,
By Him whom demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here."

IV

" 'Tis merry, 'tis merry in Fairyland,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing :

" And gaily shines the Fairyland—
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

" And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

" It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And 'twixt life and death was snatched away
To the joyless elfin bower.

" But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mould,
As fair a form as thine."

She crossed him once—she crossed him twice—
The lady was so brave ;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She crossed him thrice, that lady bold ;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mould,
Her brother, Ethert Brand !

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
But merrier were they in Dunfermline grey,
When all the bells were ringing.

The Seven Fiddlers

SEBASTIAN EVANS

A BLUE robe on their shoulder,
And an ivory bow in hand,
Seven fiddlers came with their fiddles
A-fiddling through the land,
And they fiddled a tune on their fiddles
That none could understand.

For none who heard their fiddling
Might keep his ten toes still,
E'en the cripple threw down his crutches,
And danced against his will;
Young and old they all fell a-dancing,
While the fiddlers fiddled their fill.

They fiddled down to the ferry—
The ferry by Severn-side,
And they stept aboard the ferry,
None else to row or guide,
And deftly steered the pilot,
And stoutly the oars they plied.

Then suddenly in the mid-channel
The fiddlers ceased to row,
And the pilot spake to his fellows
In a tongue that none may know :
" Let us home to our father and brothers,
And the maidens we love below."

Then the fiddlers seized their fiddles,
And sang to their fiddles a song ;
" We are coming, coming, O brothers,
To the home we have left so long,
For the world still loves the fiddler,
And the fiddler's tune is strong."

Then they stept from out the ferry
Into the Severn sea,
Down into the depths of the waters,
Where the homes of the fiddlers be,
And the ferry boat drifted slowly
Forth to the ocean free.

But where those jolly fiddlers
Walked down into the deep,
The ripples are never quiet,
But for ever dance and leap,
Though the Severn sea be silent,
And the winds be all asleep.

The Forsaken Merman

MATTHEW ARNOLD

COME, dear children, let us away ;
Down and away below.
Now my brothers call from the bay ;
Now the great winds shoreward blow ;
Now the salt tides seaward flow ;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away.
This way, this way.

Call her once before you go,
Call once yet.
In a voice that she will know :
" Margaret ! Margaret ! "
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear :
Children's voices, wild with pain.
Surely she will come again.
Call her once and come away,
This way, this way.
" Mother, dear, we cannot stay.
The white wild horses foam and fret,
Margaret ! Margaret !

Come, dear children, come away down,
Call no more.
One last look at the white-wall'd town,
And the little grey church on the windy shore,
Then come down.
She will not come though you call all day :
Come away, come away.

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay ?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell ?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep ;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, rang'd all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture ground ;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine ;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye ?
When did music come this way ?
Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away ?

Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green sea ;
She said : " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me !
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee."
I said : " Go up, dear heart, through the waves ;
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves."
She smil'd, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, were we long alone ?
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.
" Long prayers," I said, " in the world they say ;
Come ! " I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town ;
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little grey church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones, worn with rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded panes.

She sate by the pillar ; we saw her clear :
" Margaret, hist ! come quick, we are here.
Dear heart," I said, " we are long alone ;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah ! she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book !
Loud prays the priest ; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more !
Come away, come down, call no more.

Down, down, down,
Down to the depths of the sea !
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings : " O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy :
For the priest and the bell, and the holy well :
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun."
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the shuttle falls from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea ;
And her eyes are set in a stare ;
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,

And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh,
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children.
Come, children, come down !
The hoarse wind blows colder :
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door ;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing, " Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she.
And alone dwell for ever
The Kings of the Sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow ;
When clear falls the moonlight ;
When spring-tides are low :
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starr'd with broom :

And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanch'd sands a gloom :
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie ;
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town ;
At the church on the hillside—
And then come back down,
Singing " There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she ;
She left lonely for ever
The Kings of the Sea."

The Pied Piper of Hamelin

ROBERT BROWNING

I

Hamelin Town's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city ;
The river Weser, deep and wide,
Washes its walls on the southern side ;
A pleasanter spot you never spied ;
But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin was a pity.

II

Rats!
They fought the dogs, and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cook's own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats,
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

III

At last the people in a body
To the Town Hall came flocking:
"'Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy;
And as for our Corporation—shocking
To think we buy gowns lined with ermine
For dolts that can't or won't determine
What's best to rid us of our vermin!
You hope, because you're old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease!
Rouse up, sirs! Give your brains a racking
To find the remedy we're lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing!"
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

IV

An hour they sat in council,
At length the Mayor broke silence :
" It's easy to bid one rack one's brain—
I'm sure my poor head aches again,
I've scratched it so, and all in vain.
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap ! "
Just as he said this what should hap
At the chamber door but a gentle tap ?
" Bless us," cried the Mayor, " what's that ? "
(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little, though wondrous fat ;
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous.)
" Only a scraping of shoes on the mat !
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat ! "

V

" Come in ! " the Mayor cried, looking bigger,
And in did come the strangest figure !
His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red ;
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,

No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in—
There was no guessing his kith and kin!
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire:
Quoth one: "It's as my great-grandsire,
Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tomb-stone!"

VI

He advanced to the council-table:
And, "Please your honours," said he, "I'm able,
By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep, or swim, or fly, or run,
After me so as you never saw!
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole, and toad, and newt, and viper;
And people call me the Pied Piper."
(And here they noticed round his neck
A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match with his coat of the selfsame cheque;
And at the scarf's end hung a pipe;
And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying,
As if impatient to be playing
Upon his pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled.)

" Yet," said he, " poor piper as I am,
In Tartary I freed the Cham,
  Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats ;
I eased in Asia the Nizam
  Of a monstrous brood of vampire-bats ;
And as for what your brain bewilders,
  If I can rid your town of rats,
Will you give me a thousand guilders ? "
" One ? fifty thousand ! "—was the exclamation
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

VII

Into the street the Piper stept,
  Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept
  In his quiet pipe the while ;
Then, like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled
Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled ;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe had uttered,
You heard as if an army muttered ;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling ;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling ;
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,

Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives,
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
And step for step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser,
Wherein all plunged and perished
—Save one who, stout as Julius Cæsar,
Swam across and lived to carry
(As he the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary,
Which was, " At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
Into a cider-press's gripe :
And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve-cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil-flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks ;
And it seemed as if a voice
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery
Is breathed) called out, Oh rats, rejoice !
The world is grown to one vast drysaltery !
So munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon !
And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon,

All ready staved, like a great sun shone
Glorious scarce an inch before me,
Just as methought it said, Come, bore me!
—I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

VIII

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple;
"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long poles!
Poke out the nests and block up the holes!
Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
Of the rats!"—when suddenly up the face
Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a "First, if you please, my thousand guilders!"

IX

A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked blue;
So did the Corporation too.
For council dinners made rare havoc
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave, Hock;
And half the money would replenish
Their cellars' biggest butt with Rhenish.
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
With a gypsy coat of red and yellow!
"Beside," quoth the Mayor with a knowing wink,
"Our business was done at the river's brink;
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,

And what's dead can't come to life, I think.
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink
From the duty of giving you something to drink,
And a matter of money to put in your poke ;
But as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.
Besides, our losses have made us thrifty.
A thousand guilders ! Come, take fifty ! "

X

The Piper's face fell, and he cried
" No trifling ! I can't wait ; beside,
I've promised to visit by dinner-time
Bagdad, and accept the prime
Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor ;
With him, I proved no bargain-driver ;
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver !
And folks who put me in a passion
May find me pipe to another fashion."

XI

" How ? " cried the Mayor, " d'ye think I brook
Being worse treated than a Cook ?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald ?
You threaten us, fellow ? Do your worst,
Blow your pipe there till you burst ! "

XII

Once more he stept into the street,
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane ;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured air)
There was a rustling, that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling,
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,
Little hands clapping, and little tongues chattering,
And, like fowls in a farm-yard when barley is scattering,
Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

XIII

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by—
And could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
But now the Mayor was on the rack,
And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,

As the Piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters!
However, he turned from south to west,
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed;
Great was the joy in every breast.
"He never can cross that mighty top!
He's forced to let the piping drop!
And we shall see our children stop!"
When, lo, as they reached the mountain-side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed;
And the Piper advanced, and the children followed,
And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the mountain-side shut fast.
Did I say all? No! One was lame,
And could not dance the whole of the way;
And in after years if you would blame
His sadness, he was used to say;
"It's dull in our town since my playmates left!
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me.
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town, and just at hand,
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,

And everything was strange and new ;
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
And their dogs outran our fallow-deer,
And honey-bees had lost their stings,
And horses were born with eagles' wings :
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopped and I stood still,
And found myself outside the hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
And never hear of that country more ! "

XIV

Alas, alas for Hamelin !
  There came into many a burgher's pate
  A text which says, that Heaven's gate
  Opes to the rich at as easy rate
As the needle's eye takes a camel in !
The Mayor sent east, west, north, and south
To offer the Piper by word of mouth,
  Wherever it was men's lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart's content,
If he'd only return the way he went,
  And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw 'twas a lost endeavour,
And Piper and dancers were gone for ever,
They made a decree that lawyers never

Should think their records dated duly
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
"And so long after what happened here
On the twenty-second of July,
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six!"
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the children's last retreat,
They called it the Pied Piper's Street—
Where any one playing on pipe or tabor
Was sure for the future to lose his labour.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern
To shock with mirth a street so solemn;
But opposite the place of the cavern
They wrote the story on a column,
And on the Great Church window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away;
And there it stands to this very day.
And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people who ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbours lay such stress
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterraneous prison,
Into which they were trepanned
Long time ago in a mighty band

Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land ;
But how or why, they don't understand.

So, Willy, let me and you be wipers
Of scores out with all men—especially pipers !
And, whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice,
If we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise !

The Death of the Old Year

LORD TENNYSON

Full knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily sighing :
Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying.

Old year, you must not die ;
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still : he doth not move :
He will not see the dawn of day.
He hath no other life above.
He gave me a friend, and a true true-love,
And the New Year will take 'em away.

Old year, you must not go ;
So long as you have been with us,

Such joy as you have seen with us,
Old year, you shall not go.

He frothed his bumpers to the brim ;
A jollier year we shall not see.
But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,
And tho' his foes speak ill of him,
He was a friend to me.

Old year, you shall not die ;
We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you,
Old year, if you must die.

He was so full of joke and jest,
But all his merry quips are o'er.
To see him die, across the waste
His son and heir doth ride post-haste.
But he'll be dead before.

Everyone for his own.
The night is starry and cold, my friend,
And the New Year blithe and bold, my friend,
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes ! over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows flicker to and fro :
The cricket chirps : the lights burn low :
'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.

Shake hands before you die,
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you :
What is it we can do for you ?
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin,
Alack ! our friend is gone.
Close up his eyes : tie up his chin :
Step from the corpse and let him in
That standeth there alone,
And waiteth at the door.
There's a new foot on the floor, my friend,
And a new face at the door, my friend,
A new face at the door,

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POEMS OLD AND NEW

Book Four

TIME'S ECHOES

SELECTED BY

H. N. ALTON

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"Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind"

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude ;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho ! sing, heigh-ho ! unto the green holly :
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly :
Then, heigh-ho, the holly !
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot :
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh-ho ! sing, heigh-ho ! unto the green holly :
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly :
Then heigh-ho, the holly !
This life is most jolly.

Under the Greenwood Tree

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

UNDER the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither :
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to lie in the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither ;
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

"The Splendour Falls on Castle Walls"

LORD TENNYSON

THE splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story :
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

"Break, Break, Break!"

LORD TENNYSON

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
  At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
  Will never come back to me.

A Farewell

LORD TENNYSON

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
  Thy tribute wave deliver :
No more by thee my steps shall be,
  For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
  A rivulet, then a river :
No where by thee my steps shall be,
  For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,
  And here thine aspen shiver ;
And here by thee will hum the bee,
  For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
  A thousand moons will quiver ;
But not by thee my steps shall be,
  For ever and for ever.

Cha Till Maccruimein

E. A. MACKINTOSH

THE pipes in the streets were playing bravely,
The marching lads went by,
With merry hearts and voices singing
My friends marched out to die ;
But I was hearing a lonely pibroch
Out of an older war :
" Farewell, farewell, farewell, MacCrimmon,
MacCrimmon comes no more."

And every lad in his heart was dreaming
Of honour and wealth to come,
And honour and noble pride were calling
To the tune of the pipes and drum ;
But I was hearing a woman singing
On dark Dunvegan shore,
" In battle or peace, with wealth or honour,
MacCrimmon comes no more."

And there in front of the men were marching
With feet that made no mark,
The grey old ghosts of the ancient fighters
Come back again from the dark ;
And in front of them all MacCrimmon piping
A weary tune and sore :
" On the gathering day, for ever and ever,
MacCrimmon comes no more."

"The Hill Pines were Sighing"

R. BRIDGES

THE hill pines were sighing,
O'ercast and chill was the day:
A mist on the valley lying
Blotted the pleasant May.

But deep in the glen's bosom
Summer slept in the fire
Of the odorous gorse-blossom
And the hot scent of the brier.

A ribald cuckoo clamoured,
And out of the copse the stroke
Of the iron axe that hammered
The iron heart of the oak.

Anon a sound appalling,
As a hundred years of pride
Crashed, in the silence falling:
And the shadowy pine-trees sighed.

To the Cuckoo

W. WORDSWORTH

O BLITHE new-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee bird,
Or but a wandering voice?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy two-fold shout I hear ;
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near !

Though babbling only to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the spring !
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing—
A voice, a mystery.

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listened to ; that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green ;
And thou wert still a hope, a love ;
Still longed for, never seen !

And I can listen to thee yet ;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed bird ! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial faery place
That is fit home for thee.

Monaghan

SHANE LESLIE

Monaghan, mother of a thousand
Little moulded hills :
Set about with little rivers
Chained to little mills.

Rich and many-pastured Monaghan :
Mild thy meadows lie,
Melting to the distant mountains
On the mirrored sky.

Lovely, lowly-lying Monaghan,
On thy little lakes
Float and tremble lordly lilies
Hoed by fairies' rakes.

Silvered o'er with sunshine, or by
Night with shimmering fog :
Where thy sloping cornland meets
Beauteous fields of bog.

Humbly hid with heath and lichen
Waits thy turf of old,
While the hasty bees come hiding
Honey thro' thy mould.

Thro' and thro' thy restless rushes
Run a thousand rills,
Lisping long-forgotten little
Tales of Ireland's ills.

For thy mingled chaplet, oak and
Beechwood thou dost bind :
Green in summer, and in winter
Musical with wind.

Home Thoughts From Abroad

ROBERT BROWNING

I

Oh, to be in England,
Now that April's there !
And whoever wakes in England
Sees some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now.

II

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows !
Hark ! where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge.
That's the wise thrush ; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture !

And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower,
Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower !

Tim, an Irish Terrier

W. M. LETTS

It's wonderful dogs they're breeding now :
Small as a flea or large as a cow ;
But my old lad Tim he'll never be bet
By any dog that ever he met.
" Come on," says he, " for I'm not kilt yet ! "

No matter the size of the dog he'll meet,
Tim trails his coat the length o' the street.
D'ye mind his scars an' his ragged ear,
The like of a Dublin Fusilier ?
He's a massacree dog that knows no fear.

But he'd stick to me till his latest breath ;
An' he'd go with me to the gates of death.
He'd wait for a thousand years, maybe,
Scratching the door an' whining for me
If myself were inside in Purgatory.

So I laugh when I hear thim make it plain
That dogs and men never meet again.
For all their talk, who'd listen to thim,
With the soul in the shining eyes of him ?
Would God be wasting a dog like Tim ?

Ducks

F. W. HARVEY

From troubles of the world
I turn to ducks,
Beautiful comical things
Sleeping or curled
Their heads beneath white wings
By water cool,
Or finding curious things
To eat in various mucks
Beneath the pool,
Tails uppermost, or waddling
Sailor-like on the shores
Of ponds, or paddling
—Left ! right !—with fanlike feet
Which are for steady oars
When they (white galleys) float,
Each bird a boat,
Rippling at will the sweet
Wide waterway. . . .
When night is fallen *you* creep
Upstairs, but drakes and dillies
Nest with pale water-stars,
Moonbeams and shadow bars,
And water-lilies :
Fearful too much to sleep
Since they've no locks
To click against the teeth

Of weasel and fox.
And warm beneath
Are eggs of cloudy green
Whence hungry rats and lean
Would stealthily suck
New life, but for the mien,
The bold ferocious mien
Of the mother-duck.

Yes, ducks are valiant things
On nests of twigs and straws,
And ducks are soothy things
And lovely on the lake
When that the sunlight draws
Thereon their pictures dim
In colours cool.
And when beneath the pool
They dabble, and when they swim
And make their rippling rings,
O ducks are beautiful things!

But ducks are comical things—
As comical as you.
Quack!
They waddle round, they do.
They eat all sorts of things,
And then they quack.
By barn and stable and stack
They wander at their will,
But, if you go too near,

They look at you through black
Small topaz-tinted eyes
And wish you ill.
Triangular and clear
They leave their curious track
In mud at the water's edge
And there amid the sedge
And slime they gobble and peer,
Saying, " Quack ! Quack ! "

When God had finished the stars and whirl of coloured suns,
He turned His mind from big things to fashion little ones ;
Beautiful tiny things (like daisies) He made, and then
He made the comical ones in case the minds of men
Should stiffen and become
Dull, humourless and glum,
And so forgetful of their Maker be,
As to take even themselves—*quite seriously*.
Caterpillars and cats are lively and excellent puns.
All God's jokes are good—even the practical ones.
And as for the duck, I think God must have smiled a bit,
Seeing those bright eyes blink on the day He fashioned it.
And He's probably laughing still at the sound that came out of its bill !

The Bells of Heaven

RALPH HODGSON

'Twould ring the bells of Heaven
The wildest peal for years,
If Parson lost his senses

And people came to theirs,
And he and they together
Knelt down with angry prayers
For tamed and shabby tigers,
And dancing dogs and bears,
And wretched, blind pit ponies,
And little hunted hares.

Home Thoughts from the Sea

ROBERT BROWNING

NOBLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the north-west died away ;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay ;
Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay ;
In the dimmest north-east distance dawned Gibraltar grand and gray ;
" Here and here did England help me : how can I help England ? " say,
Whoso turns as I this evening turn to God to praise and pray,
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

The Plough

R. H. HORNE

ABOVE yon sombre swell of land
Thou see'st the dawn's grave orange hue,
With one pale streak like yellow sand,
And over that a vein of blue.

The air is cold above the woods ;
  All silent is the air and sky,
Except with his own lonely moods
  The blackbird holds a colloquy.

Over the broad hill creeps a beam,
  Like hope that gilds a good man's brow ;
And now ascends the nostril-steam
  Of stalwart horses come to plough.

Ye rigid ploughmen, bear in mind
  Your labour is for future hours :
Advance—spare not—nor look behind—
  Plough deep and straight with all your powers.

To Daffodils

ROBERT HERRICK

Fair daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon ;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attain'd its noon.
  Stay, stay
Until the hasting day
  Has run
But to the even-song ;
And having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay as you,
We have as short a spring ;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you or anything.
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain,
Or as the pearls of morning dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

The Tiger

WILLIAM BLAKE

Tiger, Tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry ?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burned the fire within thine eyes ?
On what wings dared he aspire ?
What the hand dared seize the fire ?

And what shoulder and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart ?
When thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand formed thy dread feet ?

What the hammer, what the chain,
Knit thy strength and forged thy brain ?

What the anvil ? What dread grasp
Dared thy deadly terrors clasp ?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see ?
Did he who made the lamb make thee ?

Tiger, Tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry ?

"And did those Feet in Ancient Time?"

WILLIAM BLAKE

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green ?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen ?

And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills ?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic mills ?

Bring me my bow of burning gold !
Bring me my arrows of desire !
Bring me my spear : O clouds, unfold !
Bring me my chariot of fire !

I will not cease from mental fight,
  Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
  In England's green and pleasant land.

To Ironfounders and others

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

When you destroy a blade of grass,
  You poison England at her roots :
Remember no man's foot can pass
  Where evermore no green life shoots.

You force the birds to wing too high
  Where your unnatural vapours creep :
Surely the living rocks shall die
  When birds no rightful distance keep.

You have brought down the firmament,
  And yet no heaven is more near :
You shape huge deeds without event,
  And half-made men believe and fear.

Your worship is your furnaces,
  Which, like old idols, lost obscenes,
Have molten bowels ; your vision is
  Machines for making more machines.

O, you are busied in the night,
  Preparing destinies of rust ;
Iron misused must turn to blight
  And dwindle to a tettered crust.

The grass, forerunner of life, is gone ;
  But plants that spring in ruins and shards,
Attend until your dream is done ;
  I have seen hemlock in your yards.

The generations of the worm
  Know not your loads piled on their soil ;
Their knotted ganglions shall wax firm
  Till your strong flagstones heave and toil.

When the old hollowed earth is cracked,
  And when, to grasp more power and feasts,
Its ores are emptied, wasted, lacked,
  The middens of your burning beasts

Shall be raked over till they yield
  Lost priceless slags for fashionings high,
Ploughs to wake grass in every field,
  Chisels men's hands to magnify.

"How Sleep the Brave!"

WILLIAM COLLINS

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest ?

When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung ;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung ;
There Honour comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay ;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell, a weeping hermit, there.

The Boy and the Angel

ROBERT BROWNING

Morning, evening, noon and night,
" Praise God ! " sang Theocrite.

Then to his poor trade he turned,
Whereby the daily meal was earned.

Hard he laboured, long and well ;
O'er his work the boy's curls fell.

But ever, at each period,
He stopped and sang, " Praise God ! "

Then back again his curls he threw,
And cheerful turned to work anew.

Said Blaise, the listening monk, " Well done ;
I doubt not thou art heard, my son :

" As well as if thy voice to-day
Were praising God, the Pope's great way.

" This is Easter Day, the Pope at Rome
Praises God from Peter's dome."

Said Theocrite, " Would God that I
Might praise Him, that great way, and die ! "

Night passed, day shone,
And Theocrite was gone.

With God a day endures alway,
A thousand years are but a day.

God said in heaven, " Nor day nor night
Now brings the voice of my delight."

Then Gabriel, like a rainbow's birth,
Spread his wings and sank to earth ;

Entered, in flesh, the empty cell,
Lived there, and played the craftsman well ;

And morning, evening, noon and night,
Praised God in place of Theocrite.

And from a boy, to youth he grew :
The man put off the stripling's hue :

The man matured and fell away
Into the season of decay :

And ever o'er the trade he bent,
And ever lived on earth content.

(He did God's will ; to him, all one
If on the earth or in the sun).

God said, " A praise is in mine ear ;
There is no doubt in it, no fear :

" So sing old worlds, and so
New worlds that from my footstool go.

" Clearer loves sound other ways :
I miss my little human praise."

Then forth sprang Gabriel's wings, off fell
The flesh disguise, remained the cell.

'Twas Easter Day : he flew to Rome,
And paused above Saint Peter's dome.

In the tiring-room close by
The great outer gallery,

With his holy vestments dight,
Stood the new Pope, Theocrite :

And all his past career
Came back upon him clear,

Since when, a boy, he plied his trade,
Till on his life the sickness weighed ;

And in his cell, when death drew near,
An angel in a dream brought cheer :

And rising from the sickness drear
He grew a priest, and now stood here.

To the East with praise he turned,
And on his sight the angel burned.

" I bore thee from thy craftsman's cell
And set thee here : I did not well.

" Vainly I left my angel sphere,
Vain was thy dream of many a year.

" Thy voice's praise seemed weak ; it dropped—
Creation's chorus stopped !

" Go back and praise again
The early way, while I remain.

" With that weak voice of our disdain,
Take up creation's pausing strain.

" Back to the cell and poor employ :
Resume the craftsman and the boy ! "

Theocrite grew old at home ;
A new Pope dwelt in Peter's dome.

One vanished as the other died :
They sought God side by side.

MEADOW VIEW LENZIE

The Spacious Firmament

JOSEPH ADDISON

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
The unwearied sun from day to day
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth ;
While all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball ?
What though no real voice nor sound
Amidst their radiant orbs be found ?
In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
For ever singing as they shine,
" The hand that made us is divine."

Milk for the Cat

HAROLD MONRO

When the tea is brought at five o'clock,
And all the neat curtains are drawn with care,
The little black cat with bright green eyes
Is suddenly purring there.

At first she pretends, having nothing to do,
She has come in merely to blink by the grate ;
But, though tea may be late or the milk may be sour,
She is never late.

And presently her agate eyes
Take a soft large milky haze,
And her independent, casual glance
Becomes a stiff hard gaze.

Then she stamps her claws or lifts her ears
Or twists her tail or begins to stir,
Till suddenly all her lithe body becomes
One breathing trembling purr.

The children eat and wriggle and laugh ;
The two old ladies stroke their silk :
But the cat is grown small and thin with desire,
Transformed to a creeping lust for milk.

The white saucer like some full moon descends
At last from the clouds of the table above ;
She sighs and dreams and thrills and glows,
Transfigured with love.

She nestles over the shining rim,
Buries her chin in the creamy sea ;
Her tail hangs loose ; each drowsy paw
Is doubled under each bending knee.

A long, dim ecstasy holds her life ;
Her world is an infinite shapeless white,
Till her tongue has curled the last holy drop.
Then she sinks back into the night,

Draws and dips her body to heap
Her sleepy nerves in the great arm-chair,
Lies defeated and buried deep
Three or four hours unconscious there.

Roundabouts and Swings

PATRICK R. CHALMERS

It was early last September nigh to Framlin'am-on-Sea,
An' 'twas Fair-day come to-morrow, an' the time was after tea,
An' I met a painted caravan a-down a dusty lane,
A Pharaoh with his waggons comin' jolt an' creak an' strain ;
A cheery cove an' sunburnt, bold o' eye and wrinkled up,
An' beside 'im on the splashboard sat a brindled terrier pup,
An' a lurcher wise as Solomon an' lean as fiddle strings
Was joggin' in the dust along 'is roundabouts and swings.

" Goo'-day," said 'e ; " Goo'-day," said I ; " an' 'ow d'you find things go,
An' what's the chance o' millions when you runs a travellin' show ? "

" I find," said 'e, " things very much as 'ow I've always found,
For mostly they goes up and down or else goes round and round."
Said 'e, " The job's the very spit o' what it always were,
It's bread and bacon mostly when the dog don't catch a 'are ;
But lookin' at it broad, an' while it ain't no merchant king's,
What's lost upon the roundabouts we pulls up on the swings ! "

" Goo' luck," said 'e ; " Goo' luck," said I ; " you've put it past a doubt ;
An' keep that lurcher on the road, the gamekeepers is out."
'E thumped upon the footboard an' 'e lumbered on again
To meet a gold-dust sunset down the owl-light in the lane ;
An' the moon she climbed the 'azels, while a night-jar seemed to spin
That Pharaoh's wisdom o'er again, 'is sooth of lose-and-win ;
For " Up an' down an' round," said 'e, " goes all appointed things,
An' losses on the roundabouts means profits on the swings ! "

Content

THOMAS DEKKER

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers ?
O sweet content !
Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexed ?
O punishment !
Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexed
To add to golden numbers, golden numbers ?
O sweet content, O sweet, O sweet content !

Work apace, apace, apace, apace ;
Honest labour bears a lovely face ;
Then hey nonny, nonny : hey nonny, nonny.

Canst drink the waters of the crispéd spring ?
O sweet content !
Swimm'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears ?
O punishment !
Then he that patiently want's burden bears,
No burden bears, but is a king, a king !
O sweet content, O sweet, O sweet content !
Work apace, apace, apace, apace ;
Honest labour bears a lovely face ;
Then hey nonny, nonny : hey nonny, nonny.

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

W. B. YEATS

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made :
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings ;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore ;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

The Beggar Maid

LORD TENNYSON

Her arms across her breast she laid ;
She was more fair than words can say ;
Bare-footed came the beggar maid
Before the king Cophetua.
In robe and crown the king stept down,
To meet and greet her on her way ;
" It is no wonder," said the lords,
" She is more beautiful than day."

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
She in her poor attire was seen :
One praised her ancles, one her eyes,
One her dark hair and lovesome mien.
So sweet a face, such angel grace,
In all that land had never been :
Cophetua sware a royal oath :
" This beggar maid shall be my queen ! "

Cargoes

JOHN MASEFIELD

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandal-wood, cedar-wood, and sweet white wine.

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke-stack,
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rails, pig-lead,
Fire-wood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

The Last Buccaneer

CHARLES KINGSLEY

Oh, England is a pleasant place for them that's rich and high,
But England is a cruel place for such poor folks as I ;
And such a port for mariners I ne'er shall see again
As the pleasant Isle of Avès, beside the Spanish main.

There were forty craft in Avès that were both swift and stout;
All furnished well with small arms and cannons round about;
And a thousand men in Avès made laws so fair and free
To choose their valiant captains and obey them loyally.

Thence we sailed against the Spaniard with his hoards of plate and gold,
Which he wrung with cruel tortures from Indian folk of old;
Likewise the merchant captains, with hearts as hard as stone;
Who flog men and keel-haul them, and starve them to the bone.

Oh, the palms grew high in Avès, and fruits that shone like gold,
And the colibris and parrots they were gorgeous to behold;
And the negro maids to Avès from bondage fast did flee,
To welcome gallant sailors, a-sweeping in from sea.

Oh, sweet it was in Avès to hear the landward breeze,
A-swing with good tobacco in a net between the trees,
With a negro lass to fan you, while you listened to the roar
Of the breakers on the reef outside, that never touched the shore.

But Scripture saith, an ending to all fine things must be;
So the king's ships sailed on Avès, and quick put down were we.
All day we fought like bulldogs, but they burst the booms at night;
And I fled in a piragua, sore wounded, from the fight.

colibris, humming birds. **piragua,** canoe.

Nine days I floated starving, and a negro lass beside,
Till for all I tried to cheer her, the poor young thing she died ;
But as I lay a-gasping, a Bristol sail came by,
And brought me home to England here, to beg until I die.

And now I'm old and going—I'm sure I can't tell where ;
One comfort is, this world's so hard, I can't be worse off there ;
If I might but be a sea-dove I'd fly across the main,
To the pleasant Isle of Avès, to look at it once again.

Drake's Drum

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below ?),
Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Yarnder lumes the Island, yarnder lie the ships,
Wi' sailor-lads a-dancin' heel-an'-toe,
An' the shore-lights flashin', an' the night-tide dashin',
He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.

Drake he was a Devon man, an' ruled the Devon seas
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below ?),
Rovin' tho' his death fell, he went wi' heart at ease,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
" Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike it when your powder's runnin' low ;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them long ago."

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas come
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below ?),
Slung atween the round shot, listenin' for the drum,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
Call him when ye sail to meet the foe ;
Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag flyin'
They shall find him ware an' wakin', as they found him long ago !

Vitai Lampada

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

THERE's a breathless hush in the close to-night—
Ten to make and a match to win—
A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
An hour to play and the last man in.
And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,
Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,
But his Captain's hand on his shoulder smote :
" Play up ! play up ! and play the game ! "

The sand of the desert is sodden red,—
Red with the wreck of a square that broke ;—
The gatling's jammed and the Colonel dead,
And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.
The river of death has brimmed his banks,
And England's far, and Honour a name,
But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks :
" Play up ! play up ! and play the game ! "

This is the word that year by year,
While in her place the School is set,
Every one of her sons must hear,
And none that hears it dare forget,
This they all with a joyful mind
Bear through life like a torch in flame,
And falling fling to the host behind—
"Play up! play up! and play the game!"

War Song of the Saracens

J. E. FLECKER

We are they who come faster than fate; we are they who ride early or late:
We storm at your ivory gate: Pale Kings of the Sunset, beware!
Not on silk nor in samet we lie, not in curtained solemnity die
Among women who chatter and cry, and children who mumble a prayer.
But we sleep by the ropes of the camp, and we rise with a shout, and we tramp
With the sun or the moon for a lamp, and the spray of the wind in our hair.

From the lands where the elephants are to the forts of Merou and Balghar,
Our steel we have brought and our star, to shine on the ruins of Rum.
We have marched from the Indus to Spain, and by God we will go there again;

We have stood on the shore of the plain where the Waters of
Destiny boom.
A mart of destruction we made at Jalula where men were
afraid,
For death was a difficult trade, and the sword was a broker of
doom ;

And the spear was a Desert Physician who cured not a few of
ambition,
And drave not a few to perdition with medicine bitter and
strong ;
And the shield was a grief to the fool and as bright as a desolate
pool,
And as straight as the rock of Stamboul when their cavalry
thundered along :
For the coward was drowned with the brave when our battle
sheered up like a wave,
And the dead to the desert we gave, and the glory to God in
our song.

Brian of Banba

ALICE MILLIGAN

. . . Mahon, King of the Clan Dal-Cas, throned in his palace
proudly,
Drank the mead from a costly glass, whilst his poet, harping
loudly,
Traced in song his lineage long to the times of ancient story,
And praised the prowess of Cennedigh's sons, and counted
their deeds of glory,

And chanted the fame of the chieftains all, the banquet-board surrounding.
But why does he turn to the stranger tall, for whom is his harp now sounding ?
" The King," he says, " is a champion bold, and bold is each champion brother.
But Brian, the youngest, is bravest and strongest, and wiser than any other."

The King rose up on his royal throne, and sorrowful was his gazing,
And greatly the envy grew in his breast at sound of such high appraising ;
For Mahon had dwelt in a palace fair, at peace with the land's invader,
While Brian lurked in the wild-cat's lair, and slept where the she-wolf laid her ;
Mahon was clad in a robe of silk, a gift of a Dane chief's sending.
The only cloak that Brian had was torn by the bramble's rending.
Mahon had called for the mead and wine from the hands of those that hasted,
But the thin cold wine that the swan-flocks sip was the only wine that Brian's lip
For a year and more had tasted.

" Brian, my brother," said the King, in a tone of scornful wonder,
" Why dost thou come in beggar-guise our palace portals under ?

Where hast thou wandered since yester year, on what venture
of love hast thou tarried ?
Tell us the count of thy prey of deer, and what cattle herds
thou hast harried. . . ."

" I have hunted no deer since yester year, I have harried no
neighbour's cattle ;
I have wooed no love, I have joined no game, save the kingly
game of battle ;
The Danes were my prey by night and day, in their forts of
hill and hollow,
And I come from the desert-lands alone since none are alive
to follow.
Some were slain on the plundered plain, and some in the mid-
night marching ;
Some were lost in the winter floods, and some by the fever
parching ;
Some have perished by wounds of spears, and some by the
shafts of bowmen ;
And some by hunger and some by thirst ; and all are dead,
but they slaughtered first
Their tenfold more of their foemen. . . ."

Song of the Dog 'Quoodle'

GILBERT K. CHESTERTON

They haven't got no noses,
The fallen sons of Eve ;
Even the smell of roses
Is not what they supposes ;

But more than mind discloses
And more than men believe.

They haven't got no noses,
They cannot even tell
When door and darkness closes
The park a Jew encloses
Where even the law of Moses
Will let you steal a smell.

The brilliant smell of water,
The brave smell of a stone,
The smell of dew and thunder,
The old bones buried under,
Are things in which they blunder
And err, if left alone.

The wind from winter forests,
The scent of scentless flowers,
The breath of brides adorning,
The smell of snare and warning,
The smell of Sunday morning,
God gave to us for ours.

And Quoodle here discloses
All things that Quoodle can,
They haven't got no noses,
They haven't got no noses,
And goodness only knowses
The noselessness of man.

On a Favourite Cat, Drowned in a Tub of Goldfishes

THOMAS GRAY

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow,
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared :
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw ; and purr'd applause.

Still had she gazed, but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream :
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
Through richest purple to the view
Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw :
A whisker first, and then a claw
With many an ardent wish
She stretch'd in vain, to reach the prize—
What female heart can gold despise ?
What Cat's averse to Fish ?

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between—
Malignant Fate sat by and smiled—
The slippery verge her feet beguiled;
She tumbled headlong in!

Eight times emerging from the flood
She mew'd to every watery God
Some speedy aid to send:—
No Dolpin came, no Nereid stirr'd,
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard—
A favourite has no friend!

From hence, ye Beauties, undeceived,
Know one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold:
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize,
Nor all that glistens, gold!

"You are Old, Father William"

LEWIS CARROL

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head—
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

" In my youth," Father William replied to his son,
" I feared it might injure the brain ;
But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."

" You are old," said the youth, " as I mentioned before,
And have grown most uncommonly fat ;
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door—
Pray, what is the reason of that ? "

" In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his grey locks,
" I kept all my limbs very supple
By the use of this ointment—one shilling the box—
Allow me to sell you a couple ? "

" You are old," said the youth, " and your jaws are too weak
For anything tougher than suet ;
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak—
Pray, how did you manage to do it ? "

" In my youth," said his father, " I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife ;
And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw
Has lasted the rest of my life."

" You are old," said the youth, " one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever ;
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose—
What made you so awfully clever ? "

"I have answered three questions, and that is enough,"
Said his father; "don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you downstairs!"

A Song of England

SIR RENNELL RODD

My England, island England, such leagues and leagues away,
It's years since I was with thee, when April wanes to May:—

Years since I saw the primrose, and watched the brown hillside
Put on white crowns of blossom and blush like April's bride;

Years since I heard thy skylark, and caught the throbbing note
Which all the soul of springtide sends through the blackbird's throat.

O England, island England, if it has been my lot
To live long years in alien lands, with men who love thee not,

I do but love thee better, who know each wind that blows—
The wind that slays the blossom, the wind that buds the rose,

The wind that shakes the taper mast and keeps the topsail furled,
The wind that braces nerve and arm to battle with the world!

I love thy moss-deep grasses, thy great untortured trees,
The cliffs that wall thy havens, the weed-scents of thy seas,

The dreamy river reaches, the quiet English homes,
The milky path of sorrel down which the springtide comes.

O land so loved through length of years, so tended and caressed,
The land that never stranger wronged nor foeman dared to waste,

Remember those thou speedest forth round all the world to be
Thy witness to the nations, thy warders on the sea!

And keep for those who leave thee and find no better place
The olden smile of welcome, the unchanged mother-face.

The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England

FELICIA HEMANS

The breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed.

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes
They, the true-hearted, came ;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame.

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear :—
They shook the depths of the forest gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea :
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free !

The ocean eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam :
And the rocking pines of the forest roared,—
This was their welcome home !

There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim band :—
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land ?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth ;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar ?
Bright jewels of the mine ?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war ?—
They sought a faith's pure shrine.

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod :
They have left unstained what there they found,—
Freedom to worship God.

"The Mariners Sleep by the Sea"

MARGARET LOUISA WOODS

THE mariners sleep by the sea.
The wild wind comes up from the sea,
It wails round the tower, and it blows through the grasses,
It scatters the sand o'er the graves where it passes,
And the sound and the scent of the sea.

The white waves beat up from the shore,
They beat on the church by the shore,
They rush round the grave-stones aslant to the leeward,
And the wall and the mariners' graves lying seaward,
That are banked with the stones from the shore.

For the huge sea comes up in the storm,
Like a beast from the lair of the storm,
To claim with its ravenous leap and to mingle
The mariners' bones with the surf and the shingle
That it rolls round the shore in the storm.

There is nothing beyond but the sky,
But the sea and the slow-moving sky,
Where a cloud from the grey lifts the gleam of its edges,
Where the foam flashes white from the shouldering ridges,
As they crowd on the uttermost sky.

The mariners sleep by the sea.
Far away there's a shrine by the sea ;
The pale women climb up the path to it slowly,
To pray to Our Lady of Storms ere they wholly
Despair of their men from the sea.

The children at play on the sand,
Where once from the shell-broidered sand
They would watch for the sails coming in from far places,
Are forgetting the ships and forgetting the faces
Lying here, lying hid in the sand.

When at night there's a seething of surf,
The grandames look out o'er the surf,
They reckon their dead and their long years of sadness,
And they shake their lean fists at the sea and its madness,
And curse the white fangs of the surf.

But the mariners sleep by the sea.
They hear not the sound of the sea,
Nor the hum of the church where the psalm is uplifted,
Nor the crying of birds that above them are drifted.
The mariners sleep by the sea.

"A Weary Lot is Thine, Fair Maid"

SIR WALTER SCOTT

"A WEARY lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine!
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine.
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green—
Nor more of me you knew,
My Love!
No more of me you knew.

"The morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow
Ere we two meet again."
He turned his charger as he spake
Upon the Irish shore,
He gave the bridle reins a shake,
Said "Adieu for evermore,
My Love!
And adieu for evermore."

Robin Hood and Allan-a-Dale

ANONYMOUS

Come listen to me, you gallants so free,
All you that love mirth for to hear,
And I will tell you of a bold outlaw
That lived in Nottinghamshire.

As Robin Hood in the forest stood,
All under the greenwood tree,
Then was he ware of a brave young man,
As fine as fine might be.

This young man was clothed in scarlet red,
In scarlet fine and gay ;
And he did frisk it over the plain,
And chanted a roundelay.

As Robin Hood next morning stood
Amongst the leaves so gay,
There did he spy the same young man
Come drooping along the way.

The scarlet he wore the day before
It was clean cast away ;
At every step he fetched a sigh—
" Alack and well-a-day ! "

Then stepped forth brave little John
And Midge, the miller's son,
Which made the young man bend his brow,
When as he saw them come.

" Stand off ! Stand off ! " the young man said,
" What is your will with me ? "
" You must come before our master straight,
Under the greenwood tree."

And when he came bold Robin before,
Robin asked him cautiously,
" Oh, hast thou any money to spare
For my merry men and me ? "

" I have no money," the young man said,
" But five shillings and a ring ;
And that I have kept this seven long years,
To have it at my wedding.

" Yesterday I should have married a maid,
But she from me was ta'en,
And chosen to be an old knight's bride,
Whereby my heart was slain."

" What is thy name ? " then said Robin Hood ;
" Come tell me without any fail : "
" By the faith of my body," then said the young man,
" My name it is Allan-a-Dale."

" What wilt thou give me ? " said Robin Hood,
" In ready gold or fee,
To help thee to thy true love again,
And deliver her unto thee ? "

" I have no money," then quoth the young man,
" No ready gold or fee,
But I will swear upon a book
Thy servant true to be."

" How many miles is it to thy love ?
Come tell me without guile."
" By the faith of my body," then said the young man,
" It is but five little mile."

Then Robin he hasted over the plain,
He did neither stint nor lin,
Until he came unto the church
Where Allan should do his wedding.

" What hast thou here ? " the bishop then said,
" I prithee now tell to me : "
" I am a bold harper," quoth Robin Hood,
" And the best in the north countree."

" O welcome, O welcome," the bishop he said,
" That music best pleaseth me : "
" You shall have no music," quoth Robin Hood,
" Till the bride and bridegroom I see."

With that came in a wealthy knight,
Which was both grave and old,
And after him a finikin lass
Did shine like the glistening gold.

" This is not a fit match," quoth bold Robin Hood,
" That you do seem to make here,
For since we are come into the church
The bride shall choose her own dear."

Then Robin Hood put the horn to his mouth,
And blew blasts two or three ;
When four-and-twenty bowmen bold
Came leaping over the lea.

And when they came into the churchyard,
Marching all in a row,
The very first man was Allan-a-Dale,
To give bold Robin his bow.

" This is thy true love," Robin he said,
" Young Allan, as I hear say ;
And you shall be married at this same time
Before we depart away."

" That shall not be," the bishop he said,
" For thy word shall not stand ;
They shall be three times asked in the church,
As the law is of our land."

Robin Hood pulled off the bishop's coat,
And put it on Little John ;
" By the faith of my body," then Robin said,
" This cloth doth make thee a man."

When Little John went into the choir,
The people began to laugh ;
He asked them seven times in the church,
Lest three times should not be enough.

" Who gives this maid ? " said Little John ;
Quoth Robin Hood, " That do I,
And he that takes her from Allan-a-Dale,
Full dearly he shall her buy."

And thus having end of the merry wedding,
The bride looked like a queen ;
And so they returned to the merry greenwood
Amongst the leaves so green.

Sir Patrick Spens

ANONYMOUS

I

The king sits in Dunfermline town
Drinking the bluid-red wine ;
" O where will I get a skeely skipper
To sail this new ship o' mine ? "

O up and spake an eldern knight,
Sat at the king's right knee,
" Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor
That ever sailed the sea."

Our king has written a braid letter,
And sealed it with his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the strand.

" To Noroway, to Noroway,
To Noroway o'er the faem ;
The king's daughter of Noroway,
'Tis thou maun bring her hame."

The first word that Sir Patrick read
Sae loud, loud laughéd he ;
The next word that Sir Patrick read
The tear blinded his e'e.

" O who is this has done this deed,
And told the king o' me,
To send us out, at this time o' year,
To sail upon the sea ?

Be it wind, be it weet, be it hail, be it sleet,
Our ship must sail the faem ;
The king's daughter of Noroway,
'Tis we must fetch her hame."

They hoised their sails on Monenday morn
With all the speed they may ;
Till they have landed in Noroway
Upon a Wodensday.

II

" Make ready, make ready, my merry men all !
Our good ship sails the morn ! "
" Now ever alack, my master dear,
I fear a deadly storm.

" I saw the new moon late yestreen
With the old moon in her arm ;
And if we go to sea, master,
I fear we'll come to harm ! "

They hadna sailed a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud,
And gurly grew the sea.

The ankers brak, and the topmasts lap,
It was sic a deadly storm ;
And the waves cam ower the broken ship
Till all her sides were torn.

" Gae, fetch a web o' the silken claith,
Another o' the twine ;
And wap them into our gude ship's side,
And let na the sea come in."

They fetched a web o' the silken claith,
Another o' the twine ;
And they wapped them round that gude ship's side,
But still the sea came in.

O laith, laith were our gude Scots lords
To weet their cork-heeled shoon !
But lang or a' the play was played
They wat their hats aboon.

And mony was the feather bed
That fluttered on the faem ;
And mony was the gude lord's son
That never mair came hame.

O lang, lang may the ladies sit
With their fans into their hand,
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand.

And lang, lang may the maidens sit,
With their gowd kames in their hair,
Awaiting for their ain dear loves,
For them they'll see nae mair.

Half-ower, half-ower from Aberdour
'Tis fifty fathoms deep ;
And there lies guid Sir Patrick Spens
With the Scots lords at his feet.

The Vagabond

R. L. STEVENSON

Give to me the life I love,
Let the lave go by me,
Give the jolly heaven above
And the by-way nigh me.

Bed in the bush with stars to see,
  Bread I dip in the river—
There's the life for a man like me,
  There's the life for ever!

Let the blow fall soon or late,
  Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around
  And the road before me.
Wealth I seek not, hope nor love,
  Nor a friend to know me;
All I seek, the heaven above
  And the road below me.

Or let autumn fall on me
  Where afield I linger,
Silencing the bird on tree,
  Biting the blue finger.
White as meal the frosty field—
  Warm the fireside haven—
Not to autumn will I yield,
  Not to winter even!

Let the blow fall soon or late,
  Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around
  And the road before me.
Wealth I ask not, hope nor love,
  Nor a friend to know me;
All I ask, the heaven above
  And the road below me.

Sea Fever

JOHN MASEFIELD

I MUST go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by ;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied ;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gipsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife ;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

The West Wind

JOHN MASEFIELD

IT's a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries ;
I never hear the west wind but tears are in my eyes ;
For it comes from the west lands, the old brown hills,
And April's in the west wind, and daffodils.

It's a fine land, the west land, for hearts as tired as mine,
Apple orchards blossom there, and the air's like wine.
There is cool green grass there, where men may lie at rest,
And the thrushes are in song there, fluting from the nest.

"Will you not come home, brother? You have been long away.
It's April, and blossom time, and white is the may:
And bright is the sun, brother, and warm is the rain;
Will you not come home, brother, home to us again?

"The young corn is green, brother, where the rabbits run;
It's blue sky, and white clouds, and warm rain and sun.
It's song to a man's soul, brother, and fire to a man's brain,
To hear the wild bees and see the merry spring again.

"Larks are singing in the west, brother, above the green wheat,
So will you not come home, brother, and rest your tired feet?
I've a balm for bruised hearts, brother, sleep for aching eyes,"
Says the warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries.

It's the white road westwards is the road I must tread
To the green grass, the cool grass, and rest for heart and head,
To the violets and the brown brooks and the thrushes' song,
In the fine land, the west land, the land where I belong.

Wander-Thirst

GERALD GOULD

Beyond the East the sunrise, beyond the West the sea,
And East and West the wander-thirst that will not let me be;
It works in me like madness, dear, to bid me say goodbye;
For the seas call, and the stars call, and oh! the call of the sky!

I know not where the white road runs, nor what the blue hills are;
But a man can have the sun for friend, and for his guide a star;
And there's no end of voyaging, when once the voice is heard,
For the river calls, and the road calls, and oh! the call of a bird!

Yonder the long horizon lies, and there by night and day
The old ships draw to home again, the young ships sail away;
And come I may, but go I must, and if men ask you why,
You may put the blame on the stars and the sun and the white road and the sky.

The Little Waves of Breffny

EVA GORE BOOTH

The grand road from the mountain goes shining to the sea,
And there is traffic in it, and many a horse and cart;
But the little roads of Cloonagh are dearer far to me,
And the little roads of Cloonagh go rambling through my heart.

A great storm from the ocean goes shouting o'er the hill,
And there is glory in it and terror on the wind;
But the haunted air of twilight is very strange and still,
And the little winds of twilight are dearer to my mind.

The great waves of the Atlantic sweep storming on their way,
Shining green and silver with the hidden herring shoal;
But the Little Waves of Breffny have drenched my heart in spray,
And the Little Waves of Breffny go stumbling through my soul.

Alexander Selkirk

WILLIAM COWPER

I AM monarch of all I survey ;
My right there is none to dispute ;
From the centre all round to the sea
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
O Solitude, where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy grace ?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms
Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,
I must finish my journey alone,
Never hear the sweet music of speech—
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts that roam over the plain,
My form with indifference see ;
They are so unacquainted with man,
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, friendship, and love,
Divinely bestowed upon man,
Oh, had I the wings of a dove,
How soon would I taste you again !
My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheered by the sallies of youth.

Religion! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word!
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.
But the sound of the church-going bell
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Ne'er sighed at the sound of a knell,
Or smiled when a Sabbath appeared.

Ye winds that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more.
My friends,—do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
Oh, tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind!
Compared with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-wingéd arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there;
But, alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair.

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair,
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.

There's mercy in every place,
And mercy, encouraging thought!
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

A Cinque Port

JOHN DAVIDSON

Below the down the stranded town
What may betide forlornly waits,
With memories of smoky skies,
When Gallic navies crossed the straits;
When waves with fire and blood grew bright,
And cannon thundered through the night.

With swinging stride the rhythmic tide
Bore to the harbour barque and sloop;
Across the bar the ship of war,
In castled stern and lanterned poop,
Came up with conquests on her lee,
The stately mistress of the sea.

Where argosies have wooed the breeze,
The simple sheep are feeding now;
And near and far across the bar
The ploughman whistles at the plough;
Where once the long waves washed the shore,
Larks from their lowly lodgings soar.

Below the down the stranded town
  Hears far away the rollers beat ;
About the wall the seabirds call ;
  The salt wind murmurs through the street ;
Forlorn the sea's forsaken bride
Awaits the end that shall betide.

Composed Upon Westminster Bridge

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Earth has not anything to show more fair ;
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty ;
This city now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
The river glideth at his own sweet will ;
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
And all that mighty heart is lying still.

Market Day

MARY WEBB

Who'll walk the fields with us to town,
In an old coat and faded gown ?

We take our roots and country sweets,
Where high walls shade the steep old streets,
And golden bells and silver chimes
Ring up and down the sleepy times.
The morning mountains smoke like fires ;
The sun spreads out his shining wires ;
The mower on the half-mown lezza
Sips his tea and takes his pleasure.
Along the lane slow waggons amble,
The sad-eyed calves awake and gambol ;
The foal that lay so sorrowful
Is playing in the grasses cool.
By slanting ways, in slanting sun,
Through startled lapwings now we run
Along the pale green hazel path
Through April's lingering aftermath
Of lady's smock and lady's slipper ;
We stay to watch a nesting dipper.
The rabbits eye us, while we pass,
Out of the sorrel-crimson grass ;
The blackbird sings, without a fear,
Where honeysuckle horns blow clear—
Cool ivory stained with true vermilion,
And here, within a silk pavilion,
Small caterpillars lie at ease.
The endless shadows of the trees
Are painted purple and cobalt ;
Grandiloquent, the rook-files halt,

lezza, meadow.

Each one aware of you and me,
And full of conscious dignity.
Our shoes are golden as we pass
With pollen from the pansied grass.
Beneath an elder—set anew
With large clean plates to catch the dew—
On fine white cheese and bread we dine.
The clear brook-water tastes like wine.
If all folk lived with labour sweet
Of their own busy hands and feet,
Such marketing, it seems to me,
Would make an end of poverty.

London Snow

ROBERT BRIDGES

When men were all asleep the snow came flying,
In large white flakes falling on the city brown,
Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely lying,
Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town ;
Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing ;
Lazily and incessantly floating down and down :
Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing ;
Hiding difference, making unevenness even,
Into angles and crevices softly drifting and sailing.
All night it fell, and when full inches seven
It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,
The clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven ;

And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed brightness
Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare :
The eye marvelled—marvelled at the dazzling whiteness ;
The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn air ;
No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,
And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.
Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling,
They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze
Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snowballing ;
Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees ;
Or peering up from under the white-massed wonder,
" O look at the trees ! " they cried, " O look at the trees ! "
With lessened load a few carts creak and blunder,
Following along the white deserted way,
A country company long dispersed asunder :
When now already the sun, in pale display
Standing by Paul's high dome, spread forth below
His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day.
For now doors open, and war is waged with the snow ;
And trains of sombre men, past tale of number,
Tread long brown paths, as towards their toil they go ;
But even for them awhile no cares encumber
Their minds diverted ; the daily word is unspoken,
The daily thoughts of labour and sorrow slumber
At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for the charm
they have broken.

The Cloud

P. B. SHELLEY

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams ;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams ;
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast ;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers
Lightning my pilot sits ;
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder ;
It struggles and howls at fits ;
Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea ;

Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The spirit he loves remains ;
And I all the while bask in Heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine Sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead ;
As on the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when Sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardours of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of Heaven above,
With wings folded I rest on mine airy nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbéd maiden, with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the Moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn ;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The stars peep behind her and peer,

And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the morn and these.

I bind the Sun's throne in a burning zone,
And the Moon's with a girdle of pearl ;
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim,
When the whirlwinds my banners unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,—
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch through which I march,
With hurricane, fire and snow,
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-coloured bow ;
The sphere-fire above its soft colours wove,
Whilst the moist Earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of Earth and Water
And the nursling of the Sky ;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores ;
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain, when with never a strain
The pavilion of Heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams

Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

Autumn

P. B. SHELLEY

The warm sun is falling, the bleak wind is wailing,
The bare boughs are sighing, the pale flowers are dying,
And the year
On the earth her deathbed, in a shroud of leaves dead,
Is lying.
Come, months, come away,
From November to May,
In your saddest array ;
Follow the bier
Of the dead cold year,
And like dim shadows watch by her sepulchre.
The chill rain is falling, the nipt worm is crawling,
The rivers are swelling, the thunder is knelling
For the year ;
The blithe swallows are flown, and the lizards each gone
To his dwelling ;
Come, months, come away,
Put on white, black, and grey,
Let your light sisters play—
Ye, follow the bier
Of the dead cold year,
And make her grave green with tear on tear.

The Bull

RALPH HODGSON

See an old unhappy bull,
Sick in soul and body both,
Slouching in the undergrowth
Of the forest beautiful,
Banished from the herd he led,
Bulls and cows a thousand head.

Cranes and gaudy parrots go
Up and down the burning sky ;
Tree-top cats purr drowsily
In the dim-day green below ;
And troops of monkeys, nutting some,
All disputing, go and come ;

And things abominable sit,
Picking offal buck or swine ;
On the mess and over it
Burnished flies and beetles shine,
And spiders big as bladders lie
Under hemlocks ten foot high ;

And a dotted serpent curled
Round and round and round a tree,
Yellowing all its greenery,
Keeps a watch on all the world,
All the world and this old bull
In the forest beautiful.

Bravely by his fall he came :
One he led, a bull of blood
Newly come to lustihood,
Fought and put his prince to shame,
Snuffed and pawed the prostrate head,
Tameless even while it bled.

There they left him, every one,
Left him there without a lick,
Left him for the birds to pick,
Left him there for carrion,
Vilely from their bosom cast
Wisdom, worth, and love at last.

When the lion left his lair
And roared his beauty through the hills,
And the vultures pecked their quills
And flew into the middle air,
Then this prince no more to reign
Came to life and lived again.

He snuffed the herd in far retreat,
He saw the blood upon the ground,
And snuffed the burning airs around
Still with beevish odours sweet,
While the blood ran down his head
And his mouth ran slaver red.

Pity him, this fallen chief,
All his splendour, all his strength,
All his body's breadth and length

Dwindled down with shame and grief,
Half the bull he was before,
Bones and leather, nothing more.

See him standing dew-lap-deep
In the rushes at the lake,
Surly, stupid, half asleep,
Waiting for his heart to break,
And the birds to join the flies
Feasting at his bloodshot eyes,—

Standing with his head hung down
In a stupor, dreaming things:
Green savannas, jungles brown,
Battlefields and bellowings,
Bulls undone and lions dead
And vultures flapping overhead.

Dreaming things: of days he spent
With his mother gaunt and lean
In the valley warm and green,
Full of baby wonderment,
Blinking out of silly eyes
At a hundred mysteries.

Dreaming over once again
How he wandered with a throng
Of bulls and cows a thousand strong,
Wandered on from plain to plain,
Up the hill and down the dale,
Always at his mother's tail;

How he lagged behind the herd,
Lagged and tottered, weak of limb,
And she turned and ran to him,
Blaring at the loathly bird
Stationed always in the skies,
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

Dreaming maybe of a day
When her drained and drying paps
Turned him to the sweets and saps,
Richer fountains by the way,
And she left the bull she bore,
And he looked to her no more ;

And his little frame grew stout,
And his little legs grew strong,
And the way was not so long ;
And his little horns came out,
And he played at butting trees
And boulder-stones and tortoises,

Joined a game of knobby skulls
With the youngsters of his year,
All the other little bulls,
Learning both to bruise and bear,
Learning how to stand a shock
Like a little bull of rock.

Dreaming of a day less dim,
Dreaming of a time less far,
When the faint but certain star

Of destiny burned clear for him,
And a fierce and wild unrest
Broke the quiet of the breast,

And the gristles of his youth
Hardened in his comely pow,
And he came to fighting growth,
Beat his bull and won his cow,
And flew his tail and trampled off
Past the tallest, vain enough ;

And curved about in splendour full,
And curved again and snuffed the airs,
As who should say Come out who dares !
And all beheld a bull, a Bull,
And knew that here was surely one
Who backed for no bull, fearing none.

And the leader of the herd
Looked and saw, and beat the ground,
And shook the forest with his sound,
Bellowed at the loathly bird
Stationed always in the skies,
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

Dreaming, this old bull forlorn,
Surely dreaming of the hour
When he came to sultan power,
And they named him master-horn,
Chiefest bull of all among
Bulls and cows a thousand strong,

And in all the trampling herd
Not a bull that barred his way,
Not a cow that said him nay,
Not a bull or cow that erred
In the furnace of his look
Dared a second, worse rebuke ;

Not in all the forest wide,
Jungle, thicket, pasture, fen,
Not another dared him then,
Dared him and again defied ;
Not a sovereign buck or boar
Came a second time for more.

Not a serpent that survived
Once the terrors of his hoof
Risked a second time reproof,
Came a second time and lived,
Not a serpent in its skin
Came again for discipline ;

Not a leopard bright as flame,
Flashing fingerhooks of steel,
That a wooden tree might feel,
Met his fury once and came
For a second reprimand,
Not a leopard in the land.

Not a lion of them all,
Not a lion of the hills,
Hero of a thousand kills,

Dared a second fight and fall,
Dared that ram terrific twice,
Paid a second time the price.

Pity him, this dupe of dream,
Leader of the herd again
Only in his daft old brain,
Once again the bull supreme,
And bull enough to bear the part
Only in his tameless heart.

Pity him that he must wake ;
Even now the swarm of flies
Blackening his bloodshot eyes
Bursts and blusters round the lake,
Scattered from the feast half-fed
By great shadows overhead ;

And the dreamer turns away
From his visionary herds
And his splendid yesterday,
Turns to meet the loathly birds
Flocking round him from the skies,
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

Rosabelle

SIR WALTER SCOTT

O LISTEN, listen, ladies gay !
No haughty feat of arms I tell ;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

" Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew !
And, gentle lady, deign to stay !
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

" The blackening wave is edged with white ;
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly ;
The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
Whose screams forbode that wreck is nigh.

" Last night the gifted seer did view
A wet shroud swathed round lady gay ;
Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch ;
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day ? "

" 'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my lady mother there
Sits lonely in her castle hall.

" 'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide
If 'tis not filled by Rosabelle."

O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam ;
'Twas broader than the watchfire's light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen :

'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from caverned Hawthornden.

Seemed all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffined lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seemed all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale ;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmered all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair :
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high Saint Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle :
Each one the holy vault doth hold,
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle.

And each Saint Clair was buried there,
With candle, with book, and with knell ;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild waves sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

The Shell

JAMES STEPHENS

And then I pressed the shell
Close to my ear
And listened well,
And straightway like a bell
Came low and clear
The slow sad murmur of far distant seas,
Whipped by an icy breeze
Upon a shore
Wind-swept and desolate.
It was a sunless strand that never bore
The footprint of a man,
Nor felt the weight
Since time began
Of any human quality or stir,
Save what the dreary winds and waves incur.
And in the hush of waters was the sound
Of pebbles rolling round,
For ever rolling with a hollow sound.
And bubbling sea-weeds as the waters go
Swish to and fro,
Their long, cold tentacles of shiny grey.
There was no day,
Nor ever came a night
Setting the stars alight
To wonder at the moon :
Was twilight only and the frightened croon,

Smitten to whimpers, of the dreary wind
And waves that journeyed blind—
And then I loosed my ear—O it was sweet
To hear a cart go jolting down the street.

The Listeners

WALTER DE LA MARE

" Is there anybody there ? " said the Traveller,
Knocking on the moonlit door ;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor ;
And a bird flew up out of the turret
Above the Traveller's head,
And he smote upon the door again a second time ;
" Is there anybody there ? " he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller ;
No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men :
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveller's call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,

While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
'Neath the starred and leafy sky ;
For he suddenly smote on the door, even
Louder, and lifted his head :—
" Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
From the one man left awake :
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

The Lady of Shalott

LORD TENNYSON

PART I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky,
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many-tower'd Camelot ;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow,
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veiled,
Slide the heavy barges trailed
By slow horses ; and unhailed
The shallop flitteth silken-sailed
Skimming down to Camelot :
But who hath seen her wave her hand ?
Or at the casement seen her stand ?
Or is she known in all the land,
The Lady of Shalott ?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
Down to tower'd Camelot ;
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot:
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
Goes by to towered Camelot;
And sometimes through the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed:
"I am half sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazoned baldrick slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed ;
On burnished hooves his warhorse trode ;
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
" Tirra lirra ' by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror cracked from side to side ;
" The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining ;
Heavily the low sky raining
Over towered Camelot ;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot :
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,
Turned to towered Camelot;
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they crossed themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in His mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott!

Tír Na Nóg

ROBERT FLOWER

I HEARD the summer calling across great breadths of sea
In the landwind and the seawind and the wind of gramarie ;
For the seawind speaks in thunder and the landwind whispers low,
But the little wind of faery you scarce can hear it blow.

But listen, listen, listen and you shall hear afar
A low and lovely murmur like the singing of a star ;
But listen, listen, listen till all things fade and fall
And the lone and luring music is master over all.

And you shall hear it chanting in one triumphal chime
Of the life that lives for ever and the fugitives of time
Beyond the green land's border and washing wastes of sea
In the world beyond the world's end, where nothing is but glee.

The magic waters gird it, and skies of laughing blue
Keep always faith with summer, and summer still is true ;
There is no end of dancing and sweet unceasing song,
And eyes to eyes make answer and love with love grows strong.

But close your ears and silence the crying of your heart,
Lest in the world of mortals you walk a man apart ;
For O ! I heard the music, I answered to the call,
And the landwind mocks my longing and the seawind saddens all.

Romance

W. J. TURNER

When I was but thirteen or so
I went into a golden land,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Took me by the hand

My father died, my brother too ;
They passed like fleeting dreams ;
I stood where Popocatapetl
In the sunlight gleams.

I dimly heard the master's voice
And boys far-off at play ;
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Had stolen me away.

I walked in a great golden dream
To and fro from school—
Shining Popocatapetl
The dusty streets did rule.

I walked home with a gold dark boy
And never a word I'd say ;
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Had taken my speech away.

I gazed entranced upon his face,
Fairer than any flower—
O shining Popocatapetl,
It was thy magic hour !

The houses, traffic, people seemed
Thin fading dreams by day;
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi,
They had stolen my soul away.

Kubla Khan

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

In Xanada did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst

Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail :
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reach'd the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean :
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war !

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves ;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice !
A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw :
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome ! those caves of ice !
And all who heard should see them there,

And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

England

W. E. HENLEY

What have I done for you,
England, my England?
What is there I would not do,
England, my own?
With your glorious eyes austere,
As the Lord were walking near,
Whispering terrible things and dear
As the Song on your bugles blown,
England—
Round the world on your bugles blown!

Where shall the watchful Sun,
England, my England,
Match the master-work you've done,
England, my own?
When shall we rejoice agen
Such a breed of mighty men
As come forward, one to ten,
To the Song on your bugles blown,
England—
Down the years on your bugles blown?

Ever the faith endures,
England, my England :—
" Take and break us : we are yours,
" England, my own !
" Life is good and joy runs high
" Between English earth and sky :
" Death is death ; but we shall die
" To the Song on your bugles blown,
" England—
" To the stars on your bugles blown ! "

They call you proud and hard,
England, my England :
You with worlds to watch and ward,
England, my own !
You whose mailed hand keeps the keys
Of such teeming destinies
You could know nor dread nor ease
Were the Song on your bugles blown,
England—
Round the Pit on your bugles blown !

Mother of Ships whose might,
England, my England,
Is the fierce old Sea's delight,
England, my own,
Chosen daughter of the Lord,
Spouse-in-Chief of the ancient sword,
There's the menace of the word
In the Song on your bugles blown,
England—
Out of heaven on your bugles blown !

Requiescat

MATTHEW ARNOLD

STREW on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes;
Ah, would that I did too!

Her mirth the world required;
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound.
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

"Jerusalem, My Happy Home"

ANONYMOUS

JERUSALEM, my happy home,
When shall I come to thee?
When shall my labours have an end?
Thy joys when shall I see?

O happy harbour of the saints!
O sweet and pleasant soil!

In thee no sorrow may be found,
No grief, no care, no toil.

There lust and lucre cannot dwell;
There envy bears no sway;
There is no hunger, heat, nor cold,
But pleasure every way.

Thy walls are made of precious stones,
Thy bulwarks diamonds square;
Thy gates are of right orient pearl,
Exceeding rich and rare.

Thy turrets and thy pinnacles
With carbuncles do shine;
Thy streets and ways are paved with gold
Surpassing clear and fine.

Ah, my sweet home, Jerusalem,
Would God I were in thee!
Would God my woes were at an end,
Thy joys that I might see!

Thy vineyards and thy orchards are
Most beautiful and fair,
Full furnishéd with trees and fruits
Most wonderful and rare.

Thy gardens and thy gallant walks
Continually are green;
There grow such sweet and pleasant flowers
As nowhere else are seen.

Quite through the streets, with silver sound,
The flood of Life doth flow,
Upon whose banks on every side
The wood of Life doth grow.

There trees for evermore bear fruit,
And evermore do spring ;
There evermore the angels sit,
And evermore do sing.

Jerusalem, my happy home,
Would God I were in thee !
Would God my woes were at an end,
Thy joys that I might see !

Ozymandias

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

I MET a traveller from an antique land
Who said : " Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed.
And on the pedestal these words appear :
' My name is Ozymandias, king of kings :
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair ! '
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

On His Blindness

JOHN MILTON

When I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent, which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He, returning, chide :
" Doth God exact day-labour, light denied ? "
I fondly ask : but Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, " God doth not need
Either man's work, or His own gifts ; who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best : His state
Is kingly ; thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest ;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

A Man's a Man for a' That

ROBERT BURNS

Is there for honest poverty
That hangs his head, and a' that ?
The coward slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that.
For a' that and a' that,
Our toils obscure and a' that ;
The rank is but the guinea-stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
  Wear hodden grey and a' that ?
Gi'e fools their silks, and knaves their wine ;
  A man's a man for a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
  Their tinsel show and a' that,
The honest man, though ne'er sae poor,
  Is king o' men for a' that.

A king can mak' a belted knight,
  A marquis, duke, and a' that ;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
  Gude faith he mauna fa' that !
For a' that and a' that,
  Their dignities and a' that,
The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
  Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may
  As come it will for a' that,
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
  May bear the gree, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
  It's coming yet for a' that,
That man to man the world o'er,
  Shall brothers be for a' that.

Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard

THOMAS GRAY

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds ;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care ;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke ;
How jocund did they drive their team afield !
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure ;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike the inevitable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where thro' the long-drawn aisles and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death ?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll ;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear :
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes—

Their lot forbade ; nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined ;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind ;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray ;
Along the cool, sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply ;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who to dumb Forgetfulness a prey
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind ?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires ;
Even from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Even in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who mindful of the unhonoured Dead
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
" Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

" There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

" Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

" One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree ;
Another came ; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he ;

" The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon agéd thorn : "

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth,
A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown.
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere ;
  Heaven did a recompense as largely send :
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear ;
  He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose
  Or draw his frailties from their dread abode
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),
  The bosom of his Father and his God.

The Circus Clown

JOHN FERGUSON

With whitened scalp and nose bedaubed with red,
He bounds into the ring and cracks his wheeze ;
Bursting with wit, he mounts a high trapeze,
Then falls into the net dispirited ;
He mimics feats pyramidal, and dread
Contortions of some modern Hercules,
While at his shins they throw a wooden cheese,
Or a soft turnip hits him on the head.
When tenting days are done, and nevermore
He smells the sawdust, sees the laughing eyes,
I somehow think that on a daisied floor
He'll turn a somersault in Paradise
To give some angel-child a glad surprise
Who never saw a circus clown before.

The Black Vulture

GEORGE STERLING

Aloof upon the day's immeasured dome
He holds unshared the silence of the sky.
Far down his bleak, relentless eyes descry
The eagle's empire and the falcon's home—
Far down the galleons of sunset roam ;
His hazards on the seas of morning lie ;
Serene he hears the broken tempest sigh
Where cold sierras gleam like scattered foam.
And least of all he holds the human race,
Unwitting now that envious men prepare
To make their dream and its fulfilment one,
When, poised above the cauldrons of the storm,
Their hearts, contemptuous of death, shall dare
His roads between the thunder and the sun.

An Incident of the French Camp

ROBERT BROWNING

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon :
A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming day ;
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused, " My plans
  That soar to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader Lannes
  Waver at yonder wall,"
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew
  A rider, bound on bound
Full-galloping ; nor bridle drew
  Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
  And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy :
  You hardly could suspect—
(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
  Scarce any blood came through)
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
  Was all but shot in two.

" Well," cried he, " Emperor, by God's grace
  We've got you Ratisbon !
The Marshal's in the market-place !
  And you'll be there anon
To see your flag-bird flap his vans
  Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him ! " The chief's eye flashed ; his plans
  Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed ; but presently
  Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother-eagle's eye
  When her bruised eaglet breathes ;

" You're wounded ! " " Nay," the soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said :
" I'm killed, sire ! " and, his chief beside,
Smiling, the boy fell dead.

The Patriot

ROBERT BROWNING

It was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad :
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago on this very day.

The air broke into a mist with bells,
The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
Had I said, " Good folk, mere noise repels—
But give me your sun from yonder skies ! "
They had answered, " And afterward, what else ? "

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun,
To give it my loving friends to keep !
Nought man could do, have I left undone :
And you see my harvest, what I reap
This very day, now a year is run.

There's nobody on the house-tops now—
Just a palsied few at the windows set ;
For the best of the sight is, all allow,
At the Shambles' Gate—or, better yet,
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind ;
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go !
In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.
" Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
Me ? "—God might question ; now instead,
'Tis God shall repay : I am safer so.

The Solitary Reaper

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Behold her single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland lass !
Reaping and singing by herself,
Stop here, or gently pass !
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain ;
O listen ! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chant
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt
Among Arabian sands ;
Such thrilling voice was never heard
In springtime from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings ?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things
And battles long ago ;
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day ?
Some natural sorrow, loss or pain
That has been and may be again ?

What'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending ;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending ;
I listened motionless and still ;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore
Long after it was heard no more.

EXTRACTS FROM

The Child and the Mariner

W. H. DAVIES

There came a stranger to my grandad's house,
The old man's nephew, a seafarer too ;
A big, strong, able man who could have walked
Tom Barlum's hill all clad in iron mail ;
So strong he could have made one man his club
To knock down others—Henry was his name,
No other name was uttered by his kin.

And here he was, in sooth ill-clad, but oh,
Thought I, what secrets of the sea are his ! . . .
This sailor knows of wondrous lands afar,
More rich than Spain, when the Phoenicians shipped
Silver for common ballast, and they saw
Horses at silver mangers eating grain ;
This man had seen the wind blow up a mermaid's hair,
Which, like a golden serpent, reared and stretched
To feel the air away beyond her head. . . .
And all his flesh was pricked with Indian ink,
His body marked as rare and delicate
As dead men struck by lightning under trees,
And pictured with fine twigs and curléd ferns ;
Chains on his neck and anchors on his arms ;
Rings on his fingers, bracelets on his wrists ;
And on his heart the *Jane* of Appledore
Was schooner-rigged, and in full sail at sea.
He could not whisper with his strong hoarse voice,
No more than could a horse creep quietly ;
He laughed to scorn the men that muffled close
For fear of wind, till all their neck was hid,
Like Indian corn wrapped up in long green leaves.
He knew no flowers but seaweeds brown and green,
He knew no birds but those that followed ships.
Full well he knew the water-world ; he heard
A grander music there than we on land,
When organ shakes a church. . . .
He many a tale of wonder told : of where,
At Argostoli, Cephalonia's sea

Ran over the earth's lip in heavy floods ;
And then again of how the strange Chinese
Conversed much as our homely blackbirds sing.
He told us how he sailed in one old ship
Near that volcano Martinique, whose powers
Shook like dry leaves the whole Caribbean seas ;
And made the sun set in a sea of fire
Which only half was his ; and dust was thick
On deck, and stones were pelted at the mast.
So, as we walked along, that seaman dropped
Into my greedy ears such words that sleep
Stood at my pillow half the night perplexed.
He told how isles sprang up and sank again,
Between short voyages, to his amaze ;
How they did come and go, and cheated charts ;
Told how a crew was cursed when one man killed
A bird that perched upon a moving barque ;
And how the sea's sharp needles, firm and strong,
Ripped open the bellies of big iron ships ;
Of mighty icebergs in the northern seas,
That haunt the far horizon like white ghosts.
He told of waves that lift a ship so high
That birds could pass from starboard unto port
Under her dripping keel.
Oh, it was sweet
To hear that seaman tell such wondrous tales.

L'Envoi

RUDYARD KIPLING

THERE's a whisper down the field where the year has shot her yield,
And the ricks stand grey to the sun,
Singing—"Over then, come over, for the bee has quit the clover,
And your English summer's done."

You have heard the beat of the off-shore wind,
And the thresh of the deep-sea rain;
You have heard the song—how long, how long?
Pull out on the trail again!
Ha' done with the Tents of Shem, dear lass,
We've seen the seasons through,
And it's time to turn on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
Pull out, pull out, on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new.

It's North you may run to the rime-ringed sun,
Or South to the blind Horn's hate;
Or East all the way into Mississippi Bay,
Or West to the Golden Gate;
Where the blindest bluffs hold good, dear lass,
And the wildest tales are true,
And the men bulk big on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
And life runs large on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new.

The days are sick and cold, and the skies are grey and old,
And the twice-breathed airs blow damp ;
And I'd sell my tired soul for the bucking beam-sea roll
Of a black Bilbao tramp,
With her load-line over her hatch, dear lass,
With a drunken Dago crew,
And her nose held down on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
From Cadiz Bar on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new.

There be triple ways to take, of the eagle or the snake,
Or the way of a man with a maid ;
But the sweetest way to me is a ship's upon the sea
In the heel of the North-East Trade.
Can you hear the crash on her bows, dear lass,
And the drum of the racing screw,
As she ships it green on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
As she lifts and 'scends on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new ?

See the shaking funnels roar, with the Peter at the fore,
And the fenders grind and heave,
And the derricks clack and grate, as the tackle hooks the crate,
And the fall-rope whines through the sheave ;
It's " Gang-plank up and in," dear lass,
It's " Hawsers warp her through ! "

And it's " All clear aft " on the old trail, our own trail,
the out trail,
We're backing down on the Long Trail—the trail that
is always new.

O the mutter overside, when the port-fog holds us tied,
And the sirens hoot their dread,
When foot by foot we creep o'er the hueless, viewless deep
To the sob of the questing lead !
It's down by the Lower Hope, dear lass,
With the Gunfleet Sands in view,
Till the Mouse swings green on the old trail, our own
trail, the out trail,
And the Gull Light lifts on the Long Trail—the trail
that is always new.

O the blazing tropic night, when the wake's a welt of
light
That holds the hot sky tame,
And the steady fore-foot snores through the planet-powdered
floors
Where the scared whale flukes in flame !
Her plates are flaked by the sun, dear lass,
And her ropes are taut with the dew,
For we're booming down on the old trail, our own trail,
the out trail,
We're sagging south on the Long Trail—the trail that
is always new.

Then home, get her home, where the drunken rollers comb,
And the shouting seas drive by,
And the engines stamp and ring, and the wet bows reel and swing,
And the Southern Cross rides high!
Yes, the old lost stars wheel back, dear lass,
That blaze in the velvet blue.
They're all old friends on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
They're God's own guides on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new.

Fly forward, O my heart, from the Foreland to the Start—
We're steaming all too slow,
And it's twenty thousand mile to our little lazy isle
Where the trumpet-orchids blow!
You have heard the call of the off-shore wind
And the voice of the deep-sea rain;
You have heard the song. How long—how long?
Pull out on the trail again!

The Lord knows what we may find, dear lass,
And The Deuce knows what we may do—
But we're back once more on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
We're down, hull-down on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new!

The Flower of Old Japan*

ALFRED NOYES

When the firelight, red and clear,
Flutters in the black wet pane,
It is very good to hear
Howling winds and trotting rain :
It is very good indeed,
When the nights are dark and cold,
Near the friendly hearth to read
Tales of ghosts and buried gold.

So with cosy toes and hands
We were dreaming, just like you ;
Till we thought of palmy lands
Coloured like a cockatoo.
All in drowsy nursery nooks
Near the clutching fire we sat,
Searching quaint old story-books
Piled upon the furry mat.

Something haunted us that night
Like a half-remembered name.
Worn old pages in that light
Seemed the same, yet not the same :
Curling in the pleasant heat
Smoothly as a shell-shaped fan,
O ! they breathed and smelt so sweet
When we turned to Old Japan !

* The following passages are selected from the longer fairy-tale of this name, by Alfred Noyes, published by Messrs. Wm. Blackwood & Sons.

Suddenly we thought we heard
  Someone tapping on the wall,
Tapping, tapping like a bird,
  Till a panel seemed to fall
Quietly ; and a tall thin man
  Stepped into the glimmering room,
And he held a little fan,
  And he waved it in the gloom.

Curious reds, and golds, and greens
  Danced before our startled eyes,
Birds from painted Indian screens,
  Beads, and shells, and dragon-flies ;
Wings, and flowers, and scent, and flame,
  Fans and fish and heliotrope ;
Till the magic air became
  Like a dream kaleidoscope.

Then he told us of a land
  Far across a fairy sea ;
And he waved his thin white hand
  Like a flower, melodiously ;
While a red and blue macaw
  Perched upon his pointed head,
And as in a dream, we saw
  All the curious things he said.

* * * * * *

With rosy finger-tips the Dawn
  Drew back the silver veils
Till lilac shimmered into lawn
  Above the satin sails ;

And o'er the waters, white and wan,
In tiny patterned state,
We saw the streets of Old Japan
Shine, like a willow plate.

O, many a milk-white pigeon roams
The purple cherry crops,
The mottled miles of pearly domes,
And blue pagoda tops,
The river with its golden canes
And dark piratic dhows,
To where beyond the twisting vanes
The burning mountain glows.

A snow-peak in the silver skies
Beyond that magic world,
We saw the great volcano rise
With incense o'er it curled,
Whose tiny thread of rose and blue
Has risen since time began,
Before the first enchanter knew
The peak of Old Japan.

Nobody watched us quietly steer
The pinnace to the painted pier,
Except one pig-tailed mandarin,
Who sat upon a chest of tea
Pretending not to hear or see ! . . .
His hands were very long and thin,
His face was very broad and white ;
And O, it was a fearful sight
To see him sit alone and grin !

His grin was very sleek and sly ;
Timidly we passed him by !
He did not seem at all to care :
So, thinking we were safely past,
We ventured to look back at last.
O, dreadful blank !—*He was not there !*
He must have hid behind his chest :
We did not wait to see the rest.

But as in reckless haste we ran,
We came upon the tall thin man,
Who called to us and waved his fan
And offered us his palanquin :
He said we must not go alone
To seek the ruby wishing-stone,
Because the white faced mandarin
Would dog our steps for many a mile,
And sit upon each purple stile
Before we came to it, and smile
And smile. His name was Creeping Sin.

He played with children's beating hearts,
And stuck them full of poisoned darts,
And long green thorns that stabbed and stung :
He'd watch until we tried to speak,
Then thrust inside his pasty cheek
His long, white, slimy tongue :
And smile at everything we said
And sometimes pat us on the head,
And say that we were very young :

He was a cousin of the man
Who said that there was no Japan.

And night and day this Creeping Sin
Would follow the path of the palanquin ;
  Yet if we still were fain to touch
The ruby, we must have no fear,
Whatever we might see or hear,
And the tall thin man would take us there ;
  He did not fear that Sly One much.
Except perhaps on a moonless night,
Nor even then if the stars were bright.

So, in the yellow palankeen
We swing along in state between
Twinkling domes of gold and green
  Through the rich bazaar,
Where the cross-legged merchants sat,
Old and almond-eyed and fat,
Each upon a gorgeous mat,
  Each in a cymar ;
Each in crimson samite breeches
Watching his barbaric riches.

Cherry blossom breathing sweet
Whispered o'er the dim blue street
Where with fierce uncertain feet
  Tawny pirates walk :
All in bells and baggy blouses,
Out of dreadful opium houses,

Out of dens where Death carouses
  Horribly they stalk ;
Girt with ataghan and dagger,
Right across the road they swagger.

And where the cherry orchards blow
We saw the maids of Miyako,
Swaying softly to and fro.
  Through the dimness of the dance :
Like sweet thoughts that shine through dreams
They glided, wreathing rosy gleams,
  And many a slim kohl-lidded glance ;
Then they fluttered with tiny rose-bud feet
To a soft frou frou and a rhythmic beat
As the music shimmered, pursuit, retreat,
  " Hands across, retire, advance ! "
And again it changed and the glimmering throng
Faded into a distant song.

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